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Blix urges 'openness' from Iran

MOSCOW (AFP) — The director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Hans Blix, on Monday urged Iran to show "a maximum of openness" if controversial plans for Russia to build a nuclear power station in Iran are completed. "If the agreement between Russia and Iran were to be completed, we would hope Iran would show a maximum of openness ... (and) accept new guarantees devised by the agency," he said. Mr. Blix acknowledged: "Any important export in the nuclear field is a legitimate subject of concern for the outside world." But he sought to play down fears over Iranian motives and Russian nuclear safety standards. He stated further that accounts of traffic in nuclear material from Russia had been "exaggerated." Mr. Blix said IAEA inspectors "have never seen any diversion of material" for military ends during regular visits to Iran. "We have had no difficulties in implementing our safeguard agreement on regular visits," he added. He also stressed Iran was a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي.

Volume 19 Number 5958

AMMAN TUESDAY, JULY 4, 1995, SAFAR 6, 1416

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Regent visits army unit

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, on Monday visited the command of the 12th Royal Mechanized Division where he met with its commander and senior officers. Prince Abdullah was briefed on the duties assigned to the division and the progress of its training programmes.

Agnelli not to visit Orient House

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel voiced satisfaction Monday after Italy's Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli decided not to visit Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Arafat East Jerusalem during an official visit this week. Ms. Agnelli, who arrives Tuesday, will meet PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Gaza City before talks with Israeli leaders. The European Union urges member country's foreign ministers to visit the Orient House, which officially houses the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks. But Ms. Agnelli has missed it off her schedule. France's then-Foreign Minister Alain Juppé and Ireland's Foreign Minister Dick Spring both braved Israeli anger and visited the Orient House this year. Israeli President Ezer Weizman cancelled a meeting with Mr. Spring in protest.

Norway withdraws envoy from Tehran

OSLO (R) — Norway said on Monday it was withdrawing its ambassador to Tehran because Iran refused to denounce the death edict against British author Salman Rushdie. "Norway will shortly terminate the mission of our ambassador to Tehran, Birger Bye," Norway's Foreign Minister Bjørn Tore Rødal said in a statement, adding that the mission would be headed by a chargé d'affaires. "We protest against the Iranian authorities' continued refusal to denounce the fatwa against Salman Rushdie and persons that have been connected with the publication of his book," Mr. Rødal added.

Qatari envoy to brief Assad on changes

DAMASCUS (R) — Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Jaber Al Thani arrived in Damascus on Monday to brief leaders on last week's change of power in the emirate, officials said. The minister told reporters he was carrying a message to President Hafez Al Assad from the new emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani, dealing with the changes in Qatar and bilateral cooperation.

U.S. to investigate Kodak charges

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States announced Monday it will investigate Eastman Kodak's charges of unfair trade practices in Japan's photographic supplies market. U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor said that Washington will look into charges by Eastman Kodak that its Japanese rival, Fuji, had acted to limit access to the Japanese market. Eastman Kodak filed a complaint in May that Fuji's action had cost it \$5.6 billion in foregone export sales since the mid-1970s.

11 Sri Lankan soldiers killed

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's Tamil Tigers shot and killed eight soldiers on Monday, while another three died when their truckload of grenades exploded after a short-circuit, the military said. The eight soldiers were killed during a clash with a group of Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam at Kopavelli, southwest of Batticaloa, the military said. Three soldiers were injured in the clash. Tiger casualties were not known.

King reiterates call for end to suffering of Iraqis

French president, in talks with HM, says EU wants larger role in Mideast

King pays tribute to ties with France, hopes for significant EU role in MENA summit

PARIS (Agencies) — His Majesty King Hussein on Monday reiterated a call for an end to the international sanctions on Iraq and deplored the absence of high-level dialogue between the international community and Baghdad.

The King, speaking to reporters after a meeting with French President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace, also reaffirmed his belief that any just and durable solution to the problem over Jerusalem should provide for the religious beliefs and sentiments of all the three monotheistic faiths.

Jordan Television said the King and President Chirac reviewed the latest developments in the Middle East peace process, Franco-Jordanian relations and issues of common interest.

Mr. Chirac briefed the King on the outcome of the European Union (EU) summit held in Cannes recently and pledges by European leaders to support the peace process.

Replying to a reporter's question after the meeting whether France was willing to lift the sanctions on Iraq, the King said there was a growing movement to see an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people.

"There is a reality in this world, and a growing one, of people saying, enough is enough," said the King. "I'm not going to speak for my French friends."

Agence France Presse, the French news agency, also par-



His Majesty King Hussein with French President Jacques Chirac at the Elysee Palace on Monday (Reuters photo)

aphrased the King as deploring the absence of high-level dialogue between the international community and Baghdad.

A report in the local press in Amman said meanwhile that Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasbi visited Baghdad last week and delivered a message from King Hussein to President Saddam Hussein. There was no confirmation of the report; nor was there any denial. Mr. Qasbi flew to Paris on Sunday to join the King in Monday's talks.

(Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan was in Amman Sunday night, sources said. The purpose of the visit or whether he held any official talks here were also not known.)

President Chirac told King Hussein that the EU wanted a bigger political role in the Middle East since it was now the largest aid contributor to the region.

Mr. Chirac has delivered a similar message to a series of Arab and Israeli visitors since taking office on May 17. The United States has long been the dominant power in the Middle East.

"In an exceptionally warm meeting with the King, the president recalled that Europe was the main aid donor to the area, contributing three times the amount given by the United States," Mr. Chirac's spokeswoman, Catherine Colonna, said after the two leaders lunched together.

She told reporters Euro-

pean states contributed \$31 billion in aid compared to \$9 billion given by Washington in 1993, the last year for which comparisons were available.

"He said the Europeans were ready to commit themselves even further financially but they believed they deserved also to be involved politically and to play a more important role in the region," Ms. Colonna said.

The French leader said that Iraq must first comply with international conditions on disarmament and respect for

the Middle East, as sought by Washington and Israel, might be too heavy an institution, she said.

King Hussein and Mr. Chirac also discussed issues related to France's participation in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit which will be held in Amman in October.

The King told reporters that the visit gave him the chance to meet with Mr. Chirac, whom he described as a dear and old friend. "This meeting gave me the chance to discuss with the

president all the issues in the region and our common aspirations regarding cooperation at the bilateral level and our hopes to enhance cooperation with Europe in all fields," the King said.

In reply to a question on why he "proposed" dividing Jerusalem into three capitals, the King said: "I did not make such a proposal. But I have placed long years and out of my feeling that I am one of the closest people to Jerusalem and that Jerusalem is always in my heart. I believe that there should be formulas where Jerusalem should be a symbol of two facts in the promising future, God willing. First that it should be a symbol of Palestinian-Israeli meeting and peace, and most importantly, The Holy City should belong to all believers in God of the three monotheistic religions and not be under the control or sovereignty of any part or side. This is my view and what I propose and call for."

"I have not floated the idea now. I have been calling all along for Jerusalem to be the essence and reality of two facts in a context of regional and comprehensive peace. One the solution of the Palestinian-Israeli problem, and Jerusalem must come to represent that in some way hopefully."

"West Jerusalem is always a de facto capital of the State of Israel. I believe that in the occupied east part of the city, the Palestinians must also have their place and then that

would be a great accomplishment for all the times to come.

"In the other area on a spiritual level is that for the city, the Old City that is so important to all the followers of the three great Abrahamic religions, the three monotheistic religions, that this city should come to represent peace between them, represent cohesion and cooperation, in encouraging interfaith dialogue to the best of our ability ... and it is time that this reality came to be, because if it does and when it does, it will mean that those holy sites ... would not belong to one or the other, but they belong to all of us who have the same one God and to have the same worship of the one God."

On Jordanian-French Relations the King said: "These relations are very special ... we had the privilege of coming to Paris and seize the first opportunity to do so to meet an old and dear friend and to congratulate him on the confidence of the people of France and to wish him all the best. And I hope we will have the privilege and honour of receiving him in Jordan with Madame Chirac too long."

The King said preparations for the MENA summit are still ongoing and voiced hope that there will be a large French and European participation in the event.

In reply to a question whether the talks with the

(Continued on page 7)

Israel ready to quit most W. Bank villages, 6 towns

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — In their most far-reaching public offer yet to the Palestinians, Israeli leaders said Monday they were willing to withdraw troops from most villages as well as six towns in the West Bank.

"Our intention is to leave almost all the towns... and most of the villages, except those along the (Israeli) border," Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told Labour Party lawmakers.

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) now hope to reach agreement by July 17 on a West Bank pullout, Palestinian elections, and the release of Palestinian prisoners held in Israel, an Israeli government official said on condition of anonymity.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Mr. Peres, who met for eight hours Saturday night in a failed effort to meet the previous target date of

July 1, would reconvene Tuesday in Gaza, Palestinian sources said.

An Israeli spokesman said Sunday the meeting would be held either Monday or Tuesday.

Mr. Peres said Mr. Arafat failed in more than eight hours of talks overnight Saturday to wrap up a deal. The two sides agreed in March to a July 1 deadline for a deal to implement the second stage, which is already one year behind the original schedule of principles on autonomy.

Army sources, meanwhile, said a round of negotiations due to open Tuesday in Cairo on the transfer of civil powers to the Palestinians would be delayed, probably until the next day, to allow for the Arafat-Peres talks first.

The much-delayed expansion of autonomy would constitute the second phase of

the September 1993 Israel-PLO accord. Palestinian self-rule began in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho in May 1994 in the first stage.

The main disagreement remaining was on the extent of the Israeli pullout: the Palestinians want control of all Arab-populated areas of the West Bank, while Israel has demanded keeping troops in some towns and most rural areas to protect the 140,000 Israelis living in settlements scattered throughout the territory.

But Israel appeared to soften its position Monday. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Israel would first pull out of four towns — Jenin, Nablus, Tulkarim and Kalkiya. It would then withdraw from Ramallah and Bethlehem as soon as bypass roads for the use of settlers in

(Continued on page 7)

2 Israeli soldiers killed, 5 wounded in Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (Agencies)

— Lebanese guerrillas on Monday clashed with Israeli troops at two locations in an occupied border zone in South Lebanon, killing two soldiers and wounding five.

Security sources said guerrillas set off a roadside bomb close to an Israeli armoured patrol near the position of Talloussa on the northern edge of the Israeli-held zone.

Two Israeli soldiers were killed in the blast and a mammoth Merkava battle tank, considered the pride of Israel's armour, was destroyed, sources said.

Two other Israeli soldiers were wounded by guerrilla mortar fire as reinforcements rushed to the scene to put out the fire, said the source.

The Israeli military command confirmed the death. It said an officer was moderately injured and a soldier lightly injured. They were taken to a hospital in northern Israel. Talloussa is five kilometres west of Israel's northern Galilee panhandle, which abuts South Lebanon.

The Iranian-backed Hizbollah claimed responsibility for the 9:30 a.m. (0630 GMT) attack. It maintained eight Israelis were killed or wounded.

Security sources in the south said Israeli troops retaliated with artillery barrages, targeting suspected guerrilla hideouts and infiltration trails north of Israel's self-styled "security zone."

Hizbollah's leader, meanwhile, was quoted as saying Israel would have to wait and see whether the guerrillas will stop attacking Israeli forces if they withdraw under a peace treaty.

"The Americans and Israelis are anxious to know the answer, which we will keep close to our chest. Let Israel withdraw and then we will see," Hizbollah

(Continued on page 7)



Thousands of soldiers, part of Sudan's Popular Defence Force, raise their AK-47 assault rifles in unison during a military rally in Khartoum on Monday (Reuters photo)

Mubarak assailants were Egyptian, Ethiopia reports

ADDIS ABABA (Agencies)

— Ethiopia said Monday that gunmen who tried to assassinate President Hosni Mubarak here were themselves Egyptian, and accused Cairo of waging "a campaign of lies and defamation" against Ethiopia.

The suspension of cooperation with the Egyptian investigators, sent here immediately after the attack, came in the middle of last week following the Egyptian accusations, the Interior Ministry official said. He did not specify whether the investigators had been expelled or remained in the Ethiopian capital.

The Egyptian president escaped unscathed when bullets thudded into his armoured limousine on June 26 as he drove from Addis Ababa airport into town for an Organisation of African Unity summit, but two attackers and two Ethiopian policemen died in the shoot-out. Ethiopian security forces killed three more of the commandos in another shoot-out on Saturday.

The five assailants killed were all Egyptians, the Ethiopian Information Ministry said in a statement. It added that Egyptian authorities had made "a despicable statement about an

alleged involvement of Ethiopian security forces" and were carrying out an "unacceptable campaign of lies and defamation" against Ethiopia.

But he also said that he felt something was odd when he arrived at Addis Ababa airport, and said the Ethiopian authorities made all his security men ride in one vehicle, contrary to normal security procedures.

Egyptian security sources said in Cairo the day after the attack that they suspected the attackers had accomplices in the Ethiopian security forces, allowing them to block Mr. Mubarak's motorcade with a car packed with explosives which did not go off.

The ministry statement there responded that "Egyptian officials have over the past week been spreading all sorts of self-serving fantastic stories solely based on their imagination."

The government was "dis-mayed by such lies and fabrications," it said, but had preferred not to rebut them earlier "because it felt that the main thing was the safety of President Mubarak and his entourage and the apprehension of the terrorists and also because it hoped that sooner

(Continued on page 7)



KING IN PARIS: His Majesty King Hussein French President Jacques Chirac (see page 2) speaks to reporters on Monday after talks with one (Petra wirephoto)

Zeroual replaces interior minister amid blasts, talks

ALGIERS (AP) — President Liamine Zeroual has replaced Algeria's interior minister amid continued violence and growing signs that authorities want to negotiate an end to the bloodshed with Islamic militants.

Mr. Zeroual replaced Abdul Rahman Meziane-Cherif with Mustapha Ben Mansour, a presidential spokesman said Saturday. No explanation for the change was given. Mr. Ben Mansour, a technocrat, is governor of the eastern Annaba region.

Mr. Meziane-Cherif, named to the post in April 1994, took a hardline stand against extremists, saying in a recent interview with the French newspaper *Le Journal du Dimanche*. "We intend to dig the grave of fundamentalism and terrorism."

But he also hinted in that interview that the people's decision would be respected in presidential elections Mr. Zeroual has vowed to hold by the end of the year, even if they want fundamentalists in power.

The interior minister is in charge of elections. The announcement came amid reports that Mr. Zeroual has met with Algeria's top fundamentalist leaders in his effort to end the insurgency despite unabated violence, including a series of bombings that killed 11 people.

Carbombs late last week, mainly in the Algiers region, killed women and children and destroyed homes and

stores, according to press accounts.

A bombing Friday in Bouinan, near Blida, about 60 kilometres south of the capital, killed five people, including three women, and injured at least seven others, three of them children, according to the daily *Al Watan*. Three homes were destroyed.

Another carbomb Friday in Tlemcen, in the west, killed an explosives expert trying to defuse it.

On Saturday, a carbomb in Boufarik, south of Algiers, killed four people and injured four others, *El Watan* reported.

On Thursday, a home-made bomb destroyed a bridge at Bourj Al Bahri on the eastern coast and killed one of two state employees in a passing car, the newspaper *Liberte* reported.

Security forces did not immediately confirm the bombings.

Carbombs have become increasingly common since the start of the insurgency that has left more than 30,000 people dead in three years.

There have been growing reports of new contacts between the military-backed government and the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) to end the bloodshed. State-run Algerian television last week confirmed the contacts in a terse bulletin but did not elaborate.

According to the latest report, Mr. Zeroual has personally met with Abassi Madani



Liamine Zeroual

and Ali Belhadj, the top leaders of the banned Islamic Salvation Front.

Sheikh Hocine Slimani, a ranking Islamic figure quoted in an interview with the daily *La Tribune*, said the talks centred on the Rome contract drawn up last January by opposition parties, including the FIS, to bring a peaceful end to the crisis.

The government has rejected the Rome accord which calls for negotiations and the freeing of Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj, thought to be under house arrest, and others held as "political prisoners."

The crisis started after the army cancelled January 1992 legislative elections the FIS appeared set to win. The ensuing crackdown on fundamentalists fed a cycle of violence that the government claims is nearing an end.

On Saturday, it announced that a curfew in place three years will be lightened by 30 minutes to run from midnight till 4 a.m. starting Wednesday, the 33rd anniversary of Algeria's independence from France.

Kabul-Delhi ties grow after opening of embassy

KABUL (AFP) — Ties between India and Afghanistan have strengthened considerably since the opening of the Indian embassy in Kabul two months ago, a senior diplomatic official here says.

"We issue on average 200 visas a week to Afghans wishing to go to India," said A.S. Toor, the Indian charge d'affaires.

Due to the relatively improved security situation in the Afghan capital, Mr. Toor said the Indian embassy reopened May 3, bringing the number of foreign missions present in Kabul to four.

"We have long historical and deep cultural ties — the most important factors which bring us back to Afghanistan," Mr. Toor said.

The other diplomatic missions in Kabul are from Indonesia, Iran and Pakistan. It is understood the Chinese, Russians and Turks are also expected to follow soon.

The Afghan visitors to India fall into three categories: those requiring medical treatment, those visiting relatives and those on business.

He said they all flew on the national carrier, Ariana Afghan Airlines, which in addition to its Peshawar, Pakistan, and Dubai destinations, flies four times a week to two ports in India, plus New Delhi and Amritsar.

While underscoring the "extremely cordial relations" the two governments enjoy, Mr. Toor strongly denied popular reports that this goodwill extended to military cooperation.

"It is one 100 per cent baseless. This is propaganda only," Mr. Toor told AFP. He also rejected claims that Indian pilots flew or have flown in the airforce of Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani, and denied Afghan airforce pilots receive training in India.

"For the past three years there has not been a single Afghan trained in India for either the army or the airforce," he stressed.

Mr. Toor said India does not take sides in the factional fighting in Afghanistan, which has continued non-stop since the April 1992 Mujahideen takeover of Kabul.

He said India's humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan would increase as countrywide security improved. India recently donated \$1.5 million in medicine to the Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital in Kabul.

TCC is working on reducing pressure on some Amman lines

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Telecommunication Corporation (TCC) sources said Monday technicians were working on shifting some of the phone lines from a busy Shmeisani exchange to others to alleviate the clog that has been plaguing the circuits for more than a week.

It was the first confirmation that overloading was the problem behind a perennial taped message — "all lines are busy" — that used to come on the line every time the phone was picked in the Jabal Amman and Jabal Hussein area.

The sources said the lines most affected were starting with 614 and 641, and that work was under way on moving some of the lines from those two exchanges to others to remove the pressure on the concerned exchanges.

"The number of lines in these two exchanges is too big to be accommodated by one exchange which has a fixed number of circuits," said an expert. "It will take some time before the extra lines are moved to other exchanges."

That also explained some of the advertisements appearing in the newspapers announcing change of telephone numbers.

No authoritative TCC official was able to confirm where precisely the problem was. Several top officials said they did not know the technicalities; others declined comment and referred all questions to TCC Director-General Walid Dweik, who was not immediately available for comment.

The problem is very acute between 12 noon and 2 p.m., the peak office hours when the use of the phones becomes crucial, according to many subscribers.

After 2 p.m., when government offices and most other establishments take a break, the pressure is down and there is no problem in getting through, according to subscribers, many of whom called the Jordan Times to find out what was wrong.

Another problem which, according to reports in the local press has since been solved, was the opening of a special service line that offered spot prices at the Amman Financial Market. Hundreds of calls at the same time to this particular number added to the already high pressure on the Shmeisani exchange, according to the reports.

The TCC sources would not comment on this aspect of the problem or its validity.

In general, officials say, the problem of telephones in Amman will be solved only after the TCC completes the first phase of an

expansion project, expected in 1996. "There is no denial that there are going to be problems here and there until that time," said an official.

In the meantime, there was no immediate explanation to what subscribers describe as another serious problem on the international lines.

Many subscribers said the difficulty in getting through to an international line was occurring for the first time since direct international dialling was introduced more than seven years ago.

They also complain that calls to 0132 for operator-assisted international dialling take a longer time than usual to be answered, leaving the caller to continue to listen for up to 10 minutes to the automated answer in English and Arabic. "International operator's service, your call will be answered soon."

Iraqi Kurd factions agree to extend truce

TEHRAN (Agencies) — The two main Kurdish factions in northern Iraq agreed Monday to extend a three-month ceasefire at indirect talks in the Iranian capital, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and its main rival, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), agreed to an "Iranian offer" to extend a truce for another month, it said quoting officials from both sides.

The current ceasefire was agreed on April 7, extended in June and had been due to expire on July 15.

The talks between the PUK and the KDP on their year-old conflict in northern Iraq took place at the weekend with Iranian mediation, IRNA said.

Fawad Maasum, a member of the PUK politburo, stressed the "need to compromise."

"Our indirect negotiations were very positive and have achieved much progress so far," Mr. Maasum told IRNA.

"The existing ceasefire between the two sides is necessary for continuation of the talks."

Mr. Maasum said his group sought "a definitive solution to the tribal conflict" in the

Kurdish-controlled region. IRNA said Iran would continue its efforts to restore peace in northern Iraq.

The conflict erupted in May 1994 over power-sharing and the control of tax revenues in northern Iraq and has left 2,200 dead, according to Kurdish sources.

A KDP official, Sami Abdul Rahman, told IRNA the talks were "useful" and praised Tehran for its mediation.

But he said PUK forces had to evacuate the main town of Arbil, the seat of the unrecognized Kurdish parliament, as a "necessary" step toward peace.

"If the PUK leaves the region, the parliament would convene again and a government would assume control of the situation," he said.

The Kurds have controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war.

Iraq warns Iran

Iraq meanwhile warned Iran against making contacts with the separatist Kurds in the north of Iraq with the aim of bringing together the two main warring Kurdish groups.

Distrust runs deep in Israel settlements

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (R) — Amid the fortified enclaves that mark the Jewish settlements of the West Bank, suspicion and distrust of Israel's government remained deeply evident on Sunday.

Despite the fact that concern for Jewish security is primarily smug efforts of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to reach agreement on expanding Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank, the settlers believe they will eventually be sacrificed to some compromise so a deal can be reached.

Yehudit Tayar, deputy to the spokesman of Yesha, the council of Jewish settlers, said the settlers had no faith in Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres regardless of his pledges to safeguard them.

When Mr. Peres emerged on Sunday from his talks with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat in Gaza, letting a July 1 deadline for the deal slip, he said: "I can only state that we will make absolutely no concessions on issues relating to security."

Mr. Tayar remained sceptical. "It would be our greatest hope that the government would stand firm on a security issue, but we expect that the government will again capitulate," she said.

The talks stumbled on failure to agree on redeployment of the Israeli army away from Palestinian population centres ahead of elections for a Palestinian council.

Unlike the Gaza Strip, where settlements are in a block that is relatively easy for the Israeli army to defend, the West Bank is peppered with fortified enclaves housing Jews.

Settlements, according to the 1993 interim PLO-Israel peace accord, are to remain during self-rule. Their fate will be decided at final negotiations starting in mid-1994.

The patchwork of settlements is so confusing in the West Bank that the army long ago painted thick yellow lines down the middle of roads to guide settlers and soldiers to the invariable cluster of red-roofed villas surrounded by barbed wire.

Many of the yellow lines wind through the narrow, crowded streets of Palestinian towns.

Israel is building a network of bypass roads to allow its people to avoid Palestinian areas under self-rule.

But the two people living cheek by jowl in the West Bank — there are 140,000 settlers amidst one million Palestinians — are highly sceptical of the bypass roads efficacy.

Palestinians fear the network will be so vast it will strangle their communities. Jewish settlers say it will be impossible to avoid all contact with Palestinians.

And in Hebron, the bypass network will be of no help. It is the only Palestinian town with Jews settled in it — some 400 in several scattered enclaves among about 110,000 Palestinians.

Jewish women go to market in Hebron escorted by troops. Men walk unescorted but with Uzi submachine guns at the ready.

The horror possible in Hebron was shown on Feb. 25, 1994, when a Jewish settler from Kiryat Arba on its outskirts gunned down at least 30 Palestinians at a site sacred to both Muslims and Jews.

Settlers say they fear what will happen when Palestinians police armed with automatic weapons are in the area.

"We warned a year-and-a-half ago that if Gaza and Jericho was implemented there would be an upscaling of terrorism and there was," Yehiel Leiter, Yesha spokesman, said. Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho came under Palestinian rule in May 1994.

"Now we're warning there will be a further upscaling of terror that will be out of control."

Despite their fears of the future, the settlers say they will prevail. "It's all very far from reaching the point of no return... somewhere along the line we're going to abort this pregnancy. The PLO state baby will be aborted," Mr. Leiter said.

"We hope it will be aborted early, so it will be less painful for everyone."

Tourabi sees Sudan as a model for Islamic revolution

KHARTOUM (R) — Hassan Al Tourabi, the charismatic ideologue behind the Sudanese government, sees his country as the testing ground for an Islamic experiment likely to frighten other Middle East governments.

Sudan is an unlikely guinea pig, given its poverty and geographical isolation, but Dr. Tourabi says he believes it still can act as a model for his brand of militant Islam.

"The Sudan is not a powerful country economically or militarily but it is an example that is inspiring," he told Reuters in his modest office in central Khartoum.

In the years since 1989, when military leader Omar Hassan Al Bashir ousted a

democratically elected government, Dr. Tourabi has turned Khartoum into the main international forum for Muslim activists exploring alternative systems of governments.

The three "popular Islamic conferences" he has organised since 1991 have attracted representatives of all the main Muslim militant movements in the Arab World, including Hamas, Islamic Jihad, Hizbollah and Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front.

At home, his government has enforced Islamic law, increased the Islamic element in education and started to set up Libyan-style people's conferences to take political decisions.

But by imposing Islamic law in the mainly animist or

Christian south, the government has in effect blocked any settlement of the chronic rebellion by the south-erners.

Dr. Tourabi's programme has alienated most of Sudan's neighbours, as well as old donors such as Britain and the United States.

Relations with Egypt sank to a new low last week when Egypt implicated Sudan in the attempt on President Hosni Mubarak's life in Addis Ababa. Sudan says it had nothing to do with it.

Dr. Tourabi is undaunted and dismissive. "They are alarmed because Sudan was not known to be a country with a rich Islamic legacy like Egypt and other Arab countries in the Middle East."

He studied law in England and at the Sorbonne in Paris, rarely quotes from the Koran and shows more interest in political theory

and practice than in theology. "My ideal Islamic World is a consultative democracy and not a Western democracy ruled by the rich. I want an economic model which is not a monopoly of the capitalist rich. I want international relations which are human without cultural domination and economic exploitation," he told Reuters.

Dr. Tourabi says an intellectual elite, naturally himself included, will be the force behind creating an Islamic society.

"The whole intellectual movement is led by elites... I am 63 now. I have very little time left so I do my best to release to the masses the knowledge or ideas I have acquired."

He studied law in England and at the Sorbonne in Paris, rarely quotes from the Koran and shows more interest in political theory

and practice than in theology.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 2111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 Captain Planet
14:30 Mantia
15:00 Road to Avonlea
15:30 The House of Eliott
16:00 Tennis: Wimbledon 1995
16:30 News in French
16:55 Tennis: Wimbledon 1995
17:00 News Headlines
17:30 You Be Your Life
18:00 The Bold and the Beautiful
18:30 Urban Angle
19:00 News in English
19:30 Death of Apartheid
19:55 New York Undercover
20:20 The Mind of Orleans (A2 III)
20:45 Keeping Up Appearances

PRAYER TIMES

05:55 Fajr
06:30 Sunrise (Sunnat) Duha
12:30 Dhuhur
16:20 Asr
19:25 Maghrib
21:24 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63735
St. Joseph Church Tel. 62490
Church of the Association Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 62366
Church of the Association Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel. 625256

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Moderate weather conditions will prevail with winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. Temp.
Amman 15/29
Aqaba 23/37
Deserts 14/33

Jordan Valley 21/36

Yesterday's high temperature: Amman 26, Aqaba 38. Humidity readings: Amman 51 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Hanna Mansour 750197
Dr. Rabi Zaitoun 388085
Dr. Arif Al Ashbali 602507
Dr. Yehya Abdul Salam 756072
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairouth pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yaacob pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairouth pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 647632

DEIR:
Dr. Ali Al Omani 272032
Alqada pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Yehya Al Tarsi 981230
Khalil pharmacy 953417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 63041
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 773121
Highway Police 843602
Traffic Police 806300
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 608906
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Reception 661101
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 660110
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khadija Maternity, J. Amn 644216
Alieh Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Palestine, Shmeisani 641714
Shmeisani Hospital 660131
University Hospital 645845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 667279
The Islamic, Abdali 6442137
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641049
Italian, Al-Muhajir 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 7711126
Army, Marjeh 8916115
Queen Abla Hospital 696100
Amal Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)96332
Zarqa National Hospital 10990061
The Sana Hospital 19996732
Al-Iklim Modern Hospital (09)96900
DEIR:
Princess Basmah Hospital (02)75555
Greek Catholic Hospital 8217276
Re Al Nisra Hospital 10324100
QADIA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:10 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:30 Damascus (RJ)
06:45 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)
06:55 Aqaba (RJ)
07:10 Beirut (RJ)
07:25 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
07:40 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
07:55 London (RJ)
08:00 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
08:10 Cairo, Alexandria (RJ)
08:25 Madrid (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 Vienna (MS)
04:45 Cairo (MS)
13:40 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
14:00 Munich (YF)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
14:20 Rome (AZ)
21:00 Aden (DY)
21:10 Beirut (ME)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday

Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday

Dep. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

Arr. Amman 7:30 a.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500
Apricot 550/350
Banana 600
Banana (Mukammar) 600
Cabbage 100/50
Carrot 220/150
Cauliflower 80/40
Cucumbers (large) 250/150
Cucumbers (small) 170/90
Eggplant 170/100
Garlic 600/450
Lemon 500/400
Marrow (large) 140/80
Marrow (small) 140/80
Mushroom 140/80
Okra 800/600
Onion (dry) 170/100
Peas 550/350
Pepper (hot) 300/200
Pepper (sweet) 250/150
Pumpkin 360/200
Soybean 270/180
Sweet Melon 230/150
Tomato 250/150
Water Melon 100/50



His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, Monday visits Al Bashir Hospital (Petra photo).

Regent visits Al-Bashir, reviews design for Prince Hamzeh hospital

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the Regent, Monday visited Al Bashir Hospital and met with Minister of Health Aref Batayneh, the hospital director and heads of various hospital sections.

government-run hospital in Amman.

Discussions also covered the prospect of starting construction on the 570-bed Prince Hamzeh hospital in Amman to help ease the pressure on Al Bashir Hospital and help improve medical services.

The Regent was briefed on the hospital's medical services and on ways of easing work pressure on hospital staff.

Al Bashir Hospital is the only

The ministry acquired a 70-dunum plot of land near the Tabarbour district in northwest Amman.

But according to the sources, shortage of funds has prevented construction of the hospital which is estimated to cost more than \$100 million.

Later the Regent toured hospital sections, was briefed on their services and chatted with patients and visitors.

WAITRO's 35th meeting convenes in Amman

Delegates take hard look at association's direction

By Cathy King
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The 35th meeting of the executive committee of the World Association of Industrial and Technological Research Organisations (WAITRO) Monday convened in Amman and reflected on the association's need to redevelop its role.

In recent years the association was almost totally dedicated to projects for its members," said WAITRO's Secretary General Frans Granjean, who added: "So new discussions are necessary to rethink the association's role."

In addition, Dr. Granjean, and the association's president, Hani Mulki (president of Jordan's Royal Scientific Society), were newly elected, among others, at the association's general assembly meeting held in February in New Delhi.

"It is quite usual that new members hope to present new ideas and want to overhaul an organisation," said Dr. Granjean enthusiastically.

"At the present time, he said that the association "could help 10 to 15 of our members on a continuous basis, but now we feel the need to expose ourselves to other members."

The aim of WAITRO, which will celebrate its 25th anniversary this year, is to provide a voice for technological research and development; to act as a "global clearinghouse" for technological information and as an agency for promoting cooperation between research establishments from developed and developing countries.

"We twine institutes together where their fields overlap. We direct institutes towards realistic sources of funding and we offer information," Dr.

Granjean explained.

WAITRO's first vice-president, Niels Nielsen, emphasised that the association's objectives are "benchmarking, dissemination and documentation of best practices," within the fields of research and development.

He added that given the association's "low budget, we should focus on core activities with a level of realism."

WAITRO is financed by its annual membership fee, which is levied in accordance with the level of the Gross National Product (GNP) per capita of member countries, and also receives funding for its activities from several governments, intergovernmental and United Nations agencies, private foundations as well as earnings from consultancy services.

In his address to the meeting, Dr. Granjean underlined WAITRO's limitations.

"The majority of WAITRO's members have not experienced it as an active agency. Many developed countries do not have members (in WAITRO) including the United Kingdom, Germany and the U.S."

Therefore, he asserted, WAITRO is not a strong association in Europe.

"We are also heavily dependent on a few donor nations. We have too few donors," Dr. Granjean said.

As a short-term plan to rectify the situation, Dr. Granjean proposed the association become more "visible" through greater publicity and communication between members; that member numbers be increased via a marketing plan specifically targeting institutions in countries like Britain, Germany and the U.S., and lastly that regional offices should be established as an active way to increase

Egypt, Jordan meet for talks on maritime trade

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian delegation led by Ports Corporation Director General Duraid Mahasneh left for Egypt Monday for talks on cooperation in maritime transport between the Suez Canal and the port of Aqaba. Discussions will centre on facilitating the flow of shipping between the Suez Canal Authority and the Ports Corporation in order to encourage trade and maritime transport between the two countries, said Dr. Mahasneh before his departure. Dr. Mahasneh said the Jordanian delegation will hold negotiations on the reduction of fees levied by Suez Canal Authority.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Milo" (in French) at the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 7:30 p.m.

* "The Civil War: the cause 1861," at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

NOVEL RECITAL

* Novel recital by novelist Yousef Damra at the Phoenix Gallery at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Paintings by Jordanian Artist Muhammad Majali at the Phoenix Gallery of Culture and Art.

* Works by Iraqi artist Tahija Al Hakim at Ab'ad At Gallery.

Abequa defence appeals for second degree murder charge

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The defence attorneys of Mohammad Ismael Abequa, accused of strangling his wife in the U.S., Monday appealed to the criminal court to amend the premeditated murder charges to second-degree murder.

"Our defendant killed his estranged wife out of rage and did not plan her murder as the prosecutor general debated in his June 28 closing argument," the lawyers told a three-judge panel.

Presiding Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq set July 10 to announce the verdict allowing the court to review the three-month trial which drew international attention after His Majesty King Hussein personally intervened in the case.

Mr. Abequa, a naturalised U.S. citizen, is accused of killing his 40-year-old wife Nihal in her apartment in New Jersey, ahead of a court hearing over the custody of their two children Lisa, 7, and Sami, 4.

In their closing argument, attorneys for the defence Masoud Khalifeh and Saleh Mughrabi contested that Mrs. Abequa drank alcohol while at home with the children and frequently visited night clubs and neglected her children.

In their 13-page summation, the defence presented their view of the Abequa family's status before the murder.

"The couple lived a happy life but often quarrelled about the way their children should be raised," the attorneys said, adding that it increased when

ally intervened in the case.

Mrs. Abequa established a relationship with another man "who convinced her to abandon her family and file for divorce."

The Abequas separated during 1993. Mrs. Abequa filed for divorce at the beginning of 1994.

The attorneys noted that the defendant repeatedly tried to settle the disputes, but his wife always rejected his bids.

"After their separation, Nihal became aggressive and would not allow her husband to see his children," the defence said.

Mr. Khalifeh and Mr. Mughrabi also repeated their objection to a foreign detective taking the stand in a Jordanian court of law. They said that such action was illegal and furthermore, the fact that a detective is summoned to testify in his own case is also beyond the

law.

In addition, the defence contested the validity of evidence collected by a U.S. prosecutor general and submitted to a Jordanian court of law.

State Prosecutor Khalid Darwish, who called for the conviction of Mr. Abequa on charges of premeditated murder and kidnapping, travelled to the U.S. in March and gathered evidence with the help of New Jersey prosecutors to be used against Mr. Abequa in trial.

Three American witnesses were asked by the criminal court to testify in the case.

The three arrived in Jordan on April 17. They were Nesime Dokur, the victim's sister, detective Gary Denamin, and Linda Sue Montgomery, a travel agent for American Airlines.

The defence pleaded for Mr.

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The three arrived in Jordan on April 17. They were Nesime Dokur, the victim's sister, detective Gary Denamin, and Linda Sue Montgomery, a travel agent for American Airlines.

The defence pleaded for Mr.

Abequa's acquittal on kidnapping charges "since the two children who were kidnapped are his own children."

Mr. Abequa was apprehended by the Jordanian authorities on July 20.

Four days later he confessed and said that he killed his wife over the custody of the children.

But on April 3, he pleaded not guilty to premeditated murder.

A month later he told the court that he killed his wife because she was seeing somebody else and because she told him that she was free to do what she wanted.

If convicted of premeditated murder, Mr. Abequa could face the death penalty. A manslaughter or a crime of honour conviction could lead to a reduction in penalty.

'NIC to introduce Internet access for educational institutes soon'

Worldwide commercial Internet users now receive e-mail from 'Jo' domain

By Rimha Cortbawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Currently restricted to commercial services provided by a sole Jordanian private enterprise, The Internet facilities will also "hopefully in the near future target educational and governmental institutes," said consultant Sakher Smeirat of the National Information Centre (NIC) at the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST).

"We are working to equip our centre with the capacity to provide access to the Internet for other users, both in the public and private sectors," said Mr. Smeirat.

So far, the NIC can only establish dial-up contact (via telephone lines) with the nearest Internet node (in Egypt), he said.

The route has proved to be inferior in efficiency and speed of message transfer, not to mention the additional costs of making an international call, said Mr. Smeirat.

With the prospect of hiring a leased line that provides direct contact with the U.S. for access to uninterrupted (traffic free) information, the NIC hopes to serve all computer centres in concerned establishments that are connected to it, according to Mr. Smeirat.

Cost of fees for the procurement of such services, he said, have not been finalised yet.

But it should be noted that, as a non-profit organisation, our fees will merely cover the cost of the working system," he added.

This service will pave the way for researchers and educators to reap the benefits of such an expanding network of information, according to Mr. Smeirat.

As its name implies, the Internet is the "network of networks," Mr. Smeirat explained.

It links research, educational, governmental and recently commercial networks worldwide, growing at unsurpassed speed as more users connect to this proliferating "information super highway," he continued.

A glance at the history of the Internet reveals its remarkably large magnitude of expansion in short periods of time and its ever-increasing efficiency and level of offered services, said Imad Ayoub, director of National Equipment and Technical Services (NETS).

This massive network, Mr. Ayoub explained, was the 1969 brainchild of U.S. researchers whose idea it was to build a computer network for easy and convenient exchange of information.

With the title ARPAnet, the project was developed by the Advanced Research Project Administration (ARPA) at the U.S. Department of Defence, and it was considered an extraordinary milestone in computer communications.

"Before that, no one imagined machines could communicate," said Mr. Ayoub. The network which at first linked a few educational

sites very soon developed to include diverse institutions.

According to Newsweek reports, "by the early 1970s other countries wanted to join in," and "by 1981 more than 200" sites were connected.

Nowadays, over 30 million users worldwide are connected to the Internet, according to Mr. Ayoub.

"In the U.S. all personal computers can be linked very cheaply. Generally speaking, all a person should do is get a modem, some software and a service provider to 'get on-line'," he said.

When commercial services joined the Internet in 1992, phenomenal growth of the network led to the diverse facilities included today.

"Increased productivity and more money followed from this connection," said Mr. Ayoub.

This resulted in a "virtuous" circle leading to greater services, more users and a larger scope of advanced facilities, he added.

Nowadays, ordinary people, rather than computer experts, can tap into the vast information resources in the Internet," said Mr. Ayoub.

"This was made possible by the development of the friendly user interface, which includes commands that are extremely simple to use," Mr. Ayoub added.

In Jordan, the ongoing commercial service was established in May 1994 to provide computer data and information to subscribers, who only "have to make a local call," Mr. Ayoub said.

The subscribers can send and receive mail through this service provider, which makes contact with Internet nodes several times on a daily basis in order to access requested data and information to the users, upon demand.

"So far, there are around 300 subscribers benefiting from the service," said Mr. Ayoub.

As of the July 1, 1995, he said, "these users started using the 'Jo' domain, having an electronic mail (e-mail) address that ends with @Jo.com.Jo."

Each country, Mr. Ayoub explained, has its own domain address, which is similar to a country code. Jordan's domain address is 'Jo'.

"Now, all the Internet users worldwide will receive and acknowledge the mail from Jordan because of the use of this 'Jo' code," said Mr. Ayoub.

A wide range of services can be provided by the Internet.

These, according to Mr. Smeirat, include e-mail (which allows the receipt and delivery of messages or comprehensive files that may be stored automatically in the system for later use, if needed); file transfer protocol (FTP) - in which useful information is stored in computers around the world for users of the Internet to acquire the files needed; WorldWide Web (WWW) - a wide area, hypermedia, powerful global information system; on-line, search and listing services; etc., Mr.

Smeirat said.

To be connected, he added, one needs a computer, a modem and a communication link, said Mr. Smeirat.

"In Jordan, we do not have a full Internet node as such yet," he said.

This, he explained, is a centre with computers supplied with communication routing and switching equipment to provide digital transmission services.

Also to have easy access of all personal computers to the Internet (or any other data communication service) from Jordan, a national digital communication network is needed, Mr. Smeirat said.

This should include lines with higher capacity for carrying information. "The available telephone lines existing in the network have limited capacity of handling information," he said.

One alternative to overcome this limitation, Mr. Smeirat said, is to build a satellite earth station to facilitate international link on a wide area transmission.

"In adopting this option, it will take some time to establish that link," he concluded.

The NIC was established in 1993 for the purpose of coordinating and managing information required for national development.

In building an integrated national information system, that links all other centres in the public and private sectors, the NIC aims to facilitate the provision of comprehensive and up-to-date economic, social and technological information.

وزارة الأشغال العامة والإسكان
دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

Invitation For Bids
Souf Wastewater Project
Contract No. 121/95/Central/JS-1

- The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/Government Tenders Directorate, invites experienced foreign contractors, with proven international experience in water and wastewater projects, from countries which meet the eligibility criteria of the European Investment Bank and local contractors who have been pre-qualified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing as First or Second Grade in Water and Sewerage, or a joint venture between eligible foreign and local contractors to submit their offers for the supply, delivery and construction of Souf Wastewater Project.
- The project consists of the supply and installation of about 41.5 km of concrete pipes for wastewater collection system ranging in diameter from 150 mm to 300 mm.
- Tender documents are available and may be examined and purchased from the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman: P.O. Box 1220 Tel.: (+) 962 6 606 757, Fax.: (+) 962 6 606 751.
- The non-refundable fee for each set of tender documents will be JD 300.
- The latest set for the purchase of tender documents by the eligible bidders is August 5th, 1995.
- Bids are due not later than 1200 hours, Jordan Local Time, on Saturday, August 19th, 1995, to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

Eng. George Haddad,
Chairman/Central Tenders Committee,
General Director/Government Tenders Directorate

وزارة الأشغال العامة والإسكان
دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

Invitation For Bids
Souf Wastewater Project
Contract No. 122/95/Central/JS-2

- The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/Government Tenders Directorate, invites experienced foreign contractors, with proven international experience in water and wastewater projects, from countries which meet the eligibility criteria of the European Investment Bank and local contractors who have been pre-qualified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing as First or Second Grade in Water and Sewerage, or a joint venture between eligible foreign and local contractors to submit their offers for the supply, delivery and construction of Souf Wastewater Project.
- The project consists of the supply and installation of about 31.5 km of concrete pipes for wastewater collection system ranging in diameter from 150 mm to 500 mm.
- Tender documents are available and may be examined and purchased from the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman: P.O. Box 1220 Tel.: (+) 962 6 606 757, Fax.: (+) 962 6 606 751.
- The non-refundable fee for each set of tender documents will be JD 200.
- The latest set for the purchase of tender documents by the eligible bidders is August 5th, 1995.
- Bids are due not later than 1200 hours, Jordan Local Time, on Saturday, August 19th, 1995, to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

Eng. George Haddad,
Chairman/Central Tenders Committee,
General Director/Government Tenders Directorate

وزارة الأشغال العامة والإسكان
دائرة العطاءات الحكومية
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS & HOUSING
GOVERNMENT TENDERS DIRECTORATE

Invitation For Bids
Amman Wastewater Project
Contract No. 123/95/Central/AS4

- The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing/Government Tenders Directorate, invites experienced foreign contractors, with proven international experience in water and wastewater projects, from countries which meet the eligibility criteria of the European Investment Bank and local contractors who have been pre-qualified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing as First or Second Grade in Water and Sewerage, or a joint venture between eligible foreign and local contractors to submit their offers for the supply, delivery and construction of Amman Wastewater Project.
- The project consists of the supply and installation of about 22.5 km of concrete pipes for wastewater collection system ranging in diameter from 150 mm to 200 mm.
- Tender documents are available and may be examined and purchased from the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman: P.O. Box 1220 Tel.: (+) 962 6 606 757, Fax.: (+) 962 6 606 751.
- The non-refundable fee for each set of tender documents will be JD 175.
- The latest set for the purchase of tender documents by the eligible bidders is August 5th, 1995.
- Bids are due not later than 1200 hours, Jordan Local Time, on Saturday, August 19th, 1995, to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

Eng. George Haddad,
Chairman/Central Tenders Committee,
General Director/Government Tenders Directorate

RAILWAY
Every Monday
Every Tuesday
Every Sunday
Every Friday

PRICES
in Jds per kg

700/500
550/350
650/450
100/50
220/150
250/150
80/40
170/90
200/100
600/450
500/400
140/80
250/150
140/80
800/600
170/100
550/350
300/200
200/120
350/200
270/180
230/150
250/150
100/50

Thai election victor wants to form government quickly

BANGKOK (R) — A new Thai coalition was quickly taking shape Monday as the winner of Sunday's general election found five partners and said he wanted to form a government by the end of the week.

The Chart Thai (Thai Nation) Party, led by Banham Silpa-archa, won 92 seats in a general election Sunday and ousted the incumbent Democrats, who finished second with 86.

Mr. Banham announced that Chart Thai, which won the most seats but not a majority in the 37-seat House of Representatives, planned to form a six-party coalition by the end of the week.

"It's likely to be this week because we have to do it as quickly as possible," Mr. Banham told a news conference at his Bangkok home. "I don't want to have a vacuum period."

He said the partners would

be the New Aspiration Party, Palang Dharma (Moral Force), Social Action Party, Praehakorn Thai (Thai Citizens) and Muon Chon (Mass), Party. The six combined would command a total of 215 seats.

Diplomats said Mr. Banham, who is expected to become the next prime minister as leader of the winning party, is moving quickly to project a good image.

"He will move as fast as he possibly can," a diplomat said. "You want to be seen to be decisive."

Traditionally the formation of a coalition government takes one to two weeks after an election. Parliament must first be convened and the king must start the process of approving a new coalition.

No date has yet been set for parliament's resumption. Mr. Banham will replace outgoing Democrat Premier Chuan Leekpai, who was Thailand's longest-serving

elected prime minister when he dissolved parliament in May following a scandal over land reform that critics say benefited wealthy business associates of Democrat Party members.

Diplomats said relations between Thailand and the United States might become strained under the new government, depending on who Mr. Banham names to his cabinet.

Two senior party members, one of whom is expected to be named to a cabinet position, were refused visas to travel to the United States because of American suspicion of their involvement in drug trafficking. They denied the allegations.

"We are certainly aware that people who have been denied visas are being proposed," said a U.S. embassy official. "In as much as they were refused visas, the appointment of these indi-

viduals could complicate bilateral relations between Thailand and the U.S."

Chart Thai and other parties also face accusations of vote buying. Poll watchdog officials said Sunday that vote-buying had been widespread throughout the campaign.

Mr. Banham, a 62-year-old businessman, has already outlined a broad list of goals for his new government.

He promised to tackle poverty, turn Thailand into a regional hub for trade and communications, undertake political reform, distribute wealth to the rural areas and speed up efforts to solve traffic and environmental problems.

Since Thai parties do not differ much ideologically, the new administration is not likely to bring in any sweeping economic, foreign or domestic policy changes, diplomats said.

S.Korea to resume rice aid for North

SEOUL (R) — South Korea said Monday it would resume rice shipments to North Korea, which were stalled after North Korea forced a Southern cargo ship to fly the Communist flag while visiting the North.

South Korea's Vice Unification Minister Song Young-dae told reporters a meeting of cabinet ministers had decided to resume rice aid for the North soon, accepting Pyongyang's official apology for the incident.

South Korea Friday halted all scheduled deliveries of rice shipments to the Stalinist North after a South Korean cargo ship, the Sea Apex, was forced to fly the Communist banner despite an earlier agreement that no flag be hoisted.

But the North responded later that day to a South Korean demand for an apology.

The Sea Apex, carrying the first part of a consignment of 150,000 tonnes of rice promised to North Korea, became the first ship from the South to enter the North since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Meanwhile, a senior Japanese Foreign Ministry official said Monday Japan is ready to ship 44,000 tonnes of rice to North Korea as the first batch of an unprecedented food aid package.

"We will decide the details of the dispatch, including the ports, later," Vice Foreign Minister Toshihiko Tsuruoka told a news conference.

Last week, Japan agreed with a North Korean envoy to extend 300,000 tonnes of rice in emergency food aid, the first official government aid of any kind between the two countries which have no diplomatic ties.

Jiji News Agency said the

first batch was expected to include 28,000 tonnes of Thai rice and 16,000 tonnes of Chinese rice, both of which Japan bought last year to make up for the country's poor 1993 harvest.

Under last week's agreement, Japan would supply half the rice as grant-in-aid through the Japanese Red Cross Society and the remaining half under a 30-year loan contract with a 10-year grace period.

The rice agreement guarantees that North Korea would use the rice for public purposes and not to boost its military stockpile or sell it for hard currency to third countries, government officials said.

The agreement said both sides were ready to hold more talks about additional rice shipments to the North, they said.

Seoul diplomat seeks asylum in N. Zealand

WELLINGTON (R) — A sacked South Korean diplomat, described by his lawyer as frightened and on the run, applied for political asylum in New Zealand Monday.

Roger Chambers, barrister for sacked Vice-Consul Choi Seung-jin, said his client was hiding somewhere in Auckland and feared being tracked down by agents of the South Korean Intelligence Service.

"He says, and I dare say he would know, there are a number of officers from that agency in New Zealand, actively looking for him," Mr. Chambers told Reuters.

"The man has been fired from his position as vice-consul and he is essentially on the run and in hiding, and very, very fearful indeed," Mr. Chambers said.

Mr. Choi, 50, had applied for refugee status in New Zealand because he feared persecution for his political opinions if he returned home.

"It would seem the Korean government led by President Kim Young-Sam is angry at him because there is an allegation about that he leaked confidential government documents to members of the parliamentary opposition," the lawyer said.

According to South Korean press reports, Mr. Choi is under suspicion in the alleged forgery of a Foreign Minister document delivered to an opposition lawmaker, Kwon Roh-Kap.

The South Korean embassy said Mr. Choi had been instructed to return home for a disciplinary hearing. He would also be the subject of a prosecutor's office inquiry in connection with the criminal charge of altering a public document.

Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Jai-Chun had travelled to New Zealand to see Mr. Choi and persuade him to go home, but Mr. Choi refused.

Cambodian rebels launch major attack

BATTAMBANG, Cambodia (AFP) — Khmer Rouge guerrillas early Monday launched a major attack in the northwestern province of Battambang, fighting their way to within shelling distance of Cambodia's second-largest city, police and military officials said.

It was unclear how many rebels took part in what appears to be the beginning of a sustained offensive, they said. But the guerrillas had been backed by several tanks and had used them as artillery support, they added.

Aid workers in Battambang town said the townspeople had remained calm and that shelling was not audible in the town centre but that a security alert prohibiting travel in the surrounding district was issued.

The fighting, which has thus far been largely limited to large artillery barrages, began as a three-pronged rebel offensive around 5:30 a.m. (2230 GMT) and by late afternoon was concentrated around Boeung Ampil commune about 20 kilometres (12 miles) south of Battambang town, the provincial capital, the officials said.

They added that the Khmer Rouge had not attacked positions on the road but areas about three to five kilometres (1.5 to three

miles) off both sides of the road.

Though intense shelling had stopped by mid-afternoon, sporadic barrages on both sides were continuing.

Casualty figures were not immediately available.

By late morning, the military hospital in Battambang had admitted three injured soldiers, one with serious head wounds, but was expecting more, an aid worker who visited the hospital said.

A doctor at a hospital in Sdao, near the front line, told AFP that civilian casualties were expected to be high, as about 25,000 people lived in the general area. Large numbers of villagers were fleeing their homes, he said.

The attack on Boeung Ampil came as government troops massed in Mong Rossei district to the east in preparation for an expected rebel advance there, a senior police official said.

"Our soldiers were prepared for an attack at Mong Rossei, but the attack did not come there," said General Chan Kosol, the deputy chief of the Battambang Provincial Police.

About 300 guerrillas had been thought to be gearing up for an attack in Mong Rossei after small attacks there late Sunday in which

portions of the Battambang-Phnom Penh rail line were blown up, he said.

"They obviously changed their minds," he added.

Government troops maintained control of Route 10, which runs from Battambang town to the Khmer Rouge stronghold at Pailin near the Thai border, according to a senior military official who declined to be named. He said the Khmer Rouge had attacked from the sides of the road.

Meanwhile, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has officially closed its field office in Battambang, ending a three-year mission which oversaw the repatriation and resettlement of more than 70 per cent of Cambodia's 370,000 refugees.

The office, which was responsible for overseeing refugee repatriation projects in the northwest provinces of Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, opened in early 1992. It was officially closed on July 1.

Its original mandate ended in May 1993 but the office's closure was delayed several times by ongoing problems faced by many of the 259,000 returnees that settled in the two provinces, according to UNHCR Senior Protection Officer Walter Hoffman.

Malaysia landslide rescue called off

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Rescuers Monday called off their search for survivors four days after Malaysia's worst landslide tragedy which killed 21, as hopes subsided of finding even bodies in the water-soaked mudslide.

Reeling from the second hillside tragedy in 19 months, Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim called for a review of all hill development, saying overdevelopment could have caused the landslide.

The cabinet is expected to announce Wednesday whether such development work will be halted, officials said Monday.

Ten foreigners — two Japanese, four Philippine nationals and four Singaporeans — were among the 21

killed when a hillside collapsed in heavy rain onto a private splotch at the foot of the Genting Highlands, 35 kilometres (21 miles) from here. Twenty-two other people were injured.

A foot belonging to one of the dead Japanese was dug up from the mudslide late Sunday.

"I do not want to discount the possibility of erosion and earth faults in the area as having caused the landslide," said Mr. Anwar, who visited the site of the tragedy late Sunday.

"There is also a possibility of negligence on the part of the developers... but we will not jump to conclusions or preclude the possibility of development pending an investigation," Mr. Anwar said,

adding he had seen the preliminary report on the tragedy.

Mr. Anwar's remarks were the latest in a string levelled by top officials and environmentalists against excessive hill-cutting and tree-felling on the highlands.

Environment Minister Law Heng Ding said Saturday that "too much hill-cutting could have expedited the waterflow, which resulted in the landslide."

But the director-general of the Geological Survey Department, Fateh Chand, told AFP it was a "natural landslide from an undisturbed area."

"There were heavy rains, and rain water and slide material came down like a torrent," Mr. Fateh said.

China denies shipping missiles to Pakistan

BEIJING (R) — China flatly denied Monday a U.S. newspaper report that quoted U.S. intelligence officials as saying they had strong evidence Beijing had given Pakistan complete medium-range ballistic missiles.

"Such a report is groundless," a spokesman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry told Reuters by telephone. He declined further comment.

The Washington Post Monday quoted U.S. intelligence officials as saying the U.S. intelligence community had mounting proof that storage crates at Pakistan's Sargodha Air Force Base contained more than 30 Chinese-made M-11 missiles.

Satellite reconnaissance photographs, intercepted communications and other intelligence reports supported the view that M-11s had been in Pakistan since November, 1992, they said.

"The evidence I have seen is incontrovertible that M-11s have been delivered and are there," the newspaper

quoted one U.S. official as saying.

The officials were quoted as saying that confirmation could oblige Washington to impose tough sanctions on China, but that the White House had ignored the evidence so far.

Pakistan could someday deploy the missiles with nuclear warheads to threaten cities in neighbouring India, they said.

One U.S. official told the paper that intelligence officials were reluctant to push the information forward for political reasons.

The Post said the issue was whether policymakers had complied with a 1990 law that forces a cutoff of U.S. government contracts, a halt on export licenses and a ban on many imports involving countries or companies that transfer complete missiles such as the M-11.

The law was enthusiastically supported by lawmakers at the time of its passage, but has never been popular in the executive branch, which has argued that it impinges on

presidential powers.

The Clinton administration acknowledges that Pakistan has long sought the M-11s to counter the future deployment of India's Prithvi, another missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads, the paper reported.

But it said so far the administration had only imposed less stringent economic sanctions against Pakistan and China after concluding that components, but not complete missiles, had been shipped.

The article said China recently sent Pakistan additional components for the system despite an October 1994 pledge by Beijing that all such trade would stop.

The reports come at a time when U.S. ties with China are increasingly tense after Beijing's detention on June 19 of Chinese-American activist Harry Wu, mounting aggravation in Beijing over improved U.S.-Taiwan links and China's continued refusal to hold senior-level talks with Washington.

Coalition accused of damaging Japan image

TOKYO (R) — Japan's leading opposition party, kicking off the first week of campaigning for upper-house elections, Monday accused the government for failing to deal with economic problems and blenching the nation's image abroad.

The elections, scheduled for July 23, are the first nationwide test for Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama's three-party coalition, centred on his Socialists and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Iehiro Ozawa, secretary-general of the New Frontier Party (NFP), criticised the coalition as an unholy alliance of former enemies, intent on grabbing power without regard to principle, and unable, or unwilling, to revive the Japanese economy.

"We need to get rid of regulations that are not benefiting the lives of the public," he told a news conference.

"But really getting to grips with this problem needs courage and debate," he said. "That's why the LDP-Socialist Murayama government can't do it. They don't even try, but even if they tried they couldn't."

The NFP was formed last year mainly by former right-leaning LDP members dis-

contented with the corruption and political stagnation that set in during the four decades of LDP rule that ended in 1993.

Mr. Ozawa, the party's most powerful lawmaker, wants to turn Japan into what he calls a "normal" country, one where business is not stifled by regulation and which other countries can negotiate with smoothly on trade or foreign policy.

He said the coalition's messy debate over a resolution to commemorate 50 years since the end of World War II, and the final ambiguous wording that angered many Asians, was an example of how it was bungling foreign relations.

The LDP and the Socialists formed a government last year to beat out a coalition of parties that later became the NFP.

Before this, the Socialists had fiercely opposed the LDP during its long rule. Mr. Ozawa said their present alliance was a way of preserving this era and shutting out parties, like his, intent on modernising Japan.

"The very reason for forming the LDP-Socialist government was because they felt they needed to, they wanted to, protect vested interests," he said.

The upper house is far less powerful than the lower, and

voter interest has so far been low. An Asahi Shimbun survey showed 59 per cent of respondents saying they had no interest.

Mr. Ozawa said voters were uninterested in the elections because the government was not doing what they wanted. But recent gubernatorial elections indicate that what the public might be looking for is not a different set of politicians, but rather a break from politicians altogether.

In April, former TV entertainer beat out candidates backed by the major parties to become governor of Japan's two most important cities, Yukio Aoshima in Tokyo and Norihiro Yokuo in Osaka.

Yukio Hatoyama, a senior lawmaker of the Sakigate Party, the smallest partner in Mr. Murayama's coalition, said this was a sign that voters had lost faith with the major parties.

"Why do we see the Yokoyama and Aoshima phenomenon at a time when the public really needs measures to deal with the economy?" he asked a news conference.

"People think a hole has been opened by the politicians, and they are looking for someone to fill this up," he said.

Pope takes a stroll in Slovak mountains

LEVOCA, Slovakia (R) — Pope John Paul II and still limping after surgery for a broken leg last year, headed high up into the mountains bordering his native Poland Monday to wind up a visit to Slovakia with a gentle hike.

According to aides, the last time the Pope set foot on the Slovak side of the High Tatras, Border Guards in Communist Czechoslovakia detained him when he strayed onto the wrong side of the frontier range from southern Poland during an outing.

"They couldn't believe he was the Bishop of Krakow," chief Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls told reporters.

The Pope had been an avid skier and mountain walker throughout most of his life until he had surgery in April last year after breaking his right leg in a bathroom fall.

Although he still limps, he has walked without a cane, during his four-day visit to strongly Roman Catholic Slovakia and has appeared more confident in his movements

than on his other four foreign trips since the operation.

The Pope planned a light lunch at a refuge at the mountain lake of Velické Pleso, 1,665 metres (5,456 ft) up in the Tatras, and would then set out on a three-hour stroll.

Cardinal Navarro-Valls said. He said the Pope, who planned to change his white robes for walking clothes, would be accompanied only by three close aides, including his personal doctor, with no media presence.

Card. Navarro-Valls denied a report in an Italian newspaper that the Pope would enter Rome's Gemelli Hospital on his return for one of the routine check-ups he has had following the removal in 1992 of a large intestinal tumour.

"The holy father is very well. His calendar is full only for July but right through until the autumn," he said. "A check-up wasn't considered necessary or convenient."

The Pope Monday wound up the public part of his visit to Slovakia with an open-air

mass celebrated from a huge pine altar at a mountain shrine to the Virgin Mary at Levoica, eastern Slovakia.

Tens of thousands of worshippers, including Poles who had crossed the border for the service, stood in mountain meadows in a cool breeze and sunshine — perfect walking weather.

"I have often heard this invitation from Slovak pilgrims who come to Rome: 'Holy Father, come and see the Tatra Mountains from their southern side too,'" the Pope said Sunday when he arrived in the region.

"Today this wish of yours and mine has come true," he said. "This countryside, unique amid the diversity of creation, speaks to us of the beauty and goodness of the creator."

The Pope ordered a swimming pool built at the papal summer retreat of Castelgandolfo south of Rome to stay fit shortly after his election in 1978 and used to go skiing in mountains east of Rome nearly every winter.

Chinese exercise near Taiwan lifts tensions

TAIPEI (Agencies) — Taiwan said Monday archival China is conducting a military exercise off its east coast, giving the local stock market the jitters and raising tension at a time when relations are already strained.

"We know they have been engaging in the military exercise, but we don't know exactly how long it will last or how big the scale is," a senior military official, who did not want to be named, told Reuters.

Local newspapers said the exercise, called the "East Sea Five," had started on June 26 and was being conducted in the air and at sea off the coast of China's eastern Zhejiang province.

The exercise was last seen 250 miles (400 km) north of the tense 220 km-wide (137 mile) Taiwan Straits which separate this island from China, the newspapers said.

Taiwan's stock market dropped, as investors saw hostility in the exercise. The weighted index plunged 2.42 per cent, or 132.03 points to 5312.94 points.

"Nobody dares to put money in the stock market now," said Chen Han-Chung, a broker from Yungli

Securities House.

Taiwan officials said the island would keep a vigilant watch over the joint air-force and navy exercise.

The ruling Nationalist Party-owned central Daily News quoted an unnamed senior military official as saying the exercise was "political and psychological warfare."

China, which views Taiwan as a renegade province, has refused to rule out using force against the island, triggering a nervous response from Taiwan whenever it conducts military activities near the Taiwan Straits.

Relations soured last month after Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui visited the United States despite fierce opposition from Beijing. China opposes all Taiwan's international contacts.

Vincent Siew, Taiwan's top policymaker on China, appealed for harmony.

"Our policy is to hope to maintain a harmonious and peaceful situation in the Taiwan Straits," Mr. Siew, chairman of the cabinet's Mainland Affairs Council, told reporters on state televi-

sion. China's last major exercise near Taiwan was in September last year when 200 aircraft and 40 warships were involved in manoeuvres within the Taiwan Straits.

Another key official, senior China negotiator Chiao Jen-Ho, blasted Beijing for its decision Saturday to postpone regular talks which the two sides have held every three months since April 1993.

The mainland's recent moves regarding cross-strait relations is like adding wood to the fire not to put out, but it gets bigger," Mr. Chiao, secretary-general of the quasi-official Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF), said.

Taiwan Premier Lien Chan inflamed China's wrath last month with a trip to Europe, prompting Beijing to postpone the scheduled high-level talks.

Meanwhile, Chinese President Jiang Zemin said Monday Washington's decision to allow the visit by Mr. Lee has seriously shaken the foundation of Sino-U.S. relations.

The current difficulties in bilateral ties "resulted wholly" from the U.S. decision,

Mr. Jiang said, adding that Washington should immediately take "practical and effective measures to thoroughly eliminate the adverse influences and consequences."

Mr. Jiang made the remarks during an invited press conference to discuss his upcoming European tour of Finland, Hungary and Germany.

However, the question of Sino-U.S. relations dominated the meeting, with the president demanding that Washington take "practical actions rather than fine words" to bring bilateral ties back to track.

"China does not want to see any setbacks in Sino-U.S. relations, but this depends on what actions the U.S. will take," Mr. Jiang was quoted as saying by the Xinhua News Agency.

Mr. Lee's visit to the United States incensed Beijing, which has so far recalled its ambassador to Washington and cancelled high-level Sino-U.S. talks in protest.

The government has warned that further retaliation will be taken, but without specifying its nature.

Estee Lauder stands by Liz Hurley

LONDON (AP) — Liz Hurley has parted from errant boyfriend Hugh Grant, at least for a while, but her well-paid job as a model for Estee Lauder seems secure.

"We stand by any decision Elizabeth makes in her personal life and have not offered her any advice. And, of course, our campaign is going forward as planned," company President Leonard Lauder said in a statement released Sunday night.

"We are supportive of Elizabeth in every way. She is terrific. We are extremely pleased with the work she is doing for us."

Grant was arrested Tuesday in Los Angeles with a prostitute, Stella Marie Thompson. Both were charged with engaging in a lewd act in a public place, and are due in court on July 18. Grant, 34, star of Four Weddings And A Funeral, was reunited with Miss Hurley Friday at the couple's rented farm house in western England. But Miss Hurley, 29, left Saturday to stay with a friend, Lord Henry Brocklehurst, at his castle in Gloucestershire.

"She is bearing up under the stress and pressure. She has made no decision about the future of her relationship," Lord Henry told reporters Sunday.

He said she was planning to leave the country for a while. Grant, meanwhile, suffered further humiliation as the News Of The World, Britain's largest-circulation newspaper, published Miss Thompson's account of her brush with stardom. She said she agreed to perform oral sex with Grant for \$60, Miss Thompson, who had been offered 150,000 by another newspaper for her story, said she hadn't recognised Grant as a film star. On Monday, all the British tabloids carried photos of a woman identified as Miss Hurley, wearing a blonde wig.

Stones rock fans with hushed-up gig

PARIS (AFP) — Hundreds of rain-drenched rock fans queued for hours along the Champs Elysees Sunday for tickets for a hushed-up concert in an intimate Paris theatre by the Rolling Stones. The ticket venue for the concert, which follows two nights of stadium rock outside Paris last week, had been kept secret until the day before the gig for just 2,000 people, to be held Monday night. Sunday morning the news was broken on a Paris radio station, and within two hours the pavement in front of the Virgin Megastore had to be cordoned off as police struggled to contain the fans' enthusiasm. Fans waited for up to six hours, in sporadically stormy conditions, before finally being allowed in to pay their 250 francs (about \$50) in return for their prized ticket and a plastic identification bracelet. "People have been talking about nothing else for the last two days. Suddenly I thought it wouldn't be such a bad idea to see them at the Olympia," said Stephanie, 22.

There were heavy rains, and rain water and slide material came down like a torrent," Mr. Fateh said.

But the director-general of the Geological Survey Department, Fateh Chand, told AFP it was a "natural landslide from an undisturbed area."

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Freeing of U.K. soldier causes fury in Belfast

BELFAST (R) — Britain freed Monday a soldier jailed for life for the murder of a teenage Belfast girl, provoking the anger of the Irish government and street protests in Belfast.

Angry youths hijacked and set alight cars in Roman Catholic areas of Belfast soon after the British government freed on parole 27-year-old paratrooper Lee Clegg for the 1990 killing of 17-year-old Catholic Karen Reilly.

Police warned drivers of commercial vehicles to steer clear of the Ballymurphy, New Lodge and Ardoyne areas of Belfast where many of the province's 40 per cent Catholic minority live.

Irish Prime Minister John Bruton issued a tersely-worded statement urging his partner in a Northern Ireland peace drive, British Premier John Major, to show equal clemency to about 1,000 people jailed over the Northern

Ireland conflict.

Britain resolutely refused to treat them as political prisoners and said Clegg was paroled after a review of his case on its merits.

Britain's Northern Ireland secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, said he had taken into account an appeal court ruling that Clegg should have been tried for manslaughter rather than murder.

Reilly and the driver of a stolen car, Martin Peake, were killed, when soldiers fired on it on a Belfast Road at night.

London's Northern Ireland office said he was paroled at dawn after serving two years for the killing which led to a loud campaign in Britain that he should be freed because the army was protecting the province from Irish Republican Army guerrillas.

Her father, Sean Reilly, told Irish Radio: "He's got away with murder, tramped

on Karen's memory. It's very sad. They made special rules for him because he wore a para's uniform."

Mr. Bruton called on Britain to "apply the same approach" to all people jailed in the conflict. About two thirds of them are linked to IRA violence to end British rule of Northern Ireland.

Mr. Bruton said he had told Mr. Major recently that "all those convicted of serious offences should be treated equally by law and by executive action."

Britain denies there are any political prisoners in its cells and has shunned appeals to free Irish Republican or pro-British loyalist guerrillas to smooth a faltering Anglo-Irish peace initiative.

Pat Doherty, vice-president of the Irish Republican Party Sinn Féin, accused Mr. Major of timing the release to appease right-wingers on the eve of a Brit-

ish Conservative Party leadership election.

"It is clearly a very selective release to appease the British and military establishment. It is a political motivated selection to help John Major with his reelection campaign," he told Irish Radio.

He warned that there would be serious repercussions unless Britain dropped its long-standing refusal to free hundreds of IRA prisoners jailed for the 25-year guerrilla war which ended with an IRA ceasefire last Sept. 1.

Clegg's supporters were jubilant. They said the paratrooper had opened fire thinking he and other soldiers were about to be attacked in a Belfast war zone.

Irish leaders and Northern Irish nationalists have warned that the peace process could suffer from Clegg's release.

Peace talks deadlocked over Dudayev, Chechenya's status

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian and Chechen peace negotiators appeared deadlocked as talks resumed in the war-shattered Chechen capital Grozny Monday after a senior member of the Russian delegation met separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev in the mountains.

Arkady Volokh proposed that if Mr. Dudayev refused to accept a Russian "zero option" proposal he should "leave for any country outside the Commonwealth of Independent States," Interfax News Agency reported.

Mr. Volokh did not give further details about his meeting with Mr. Dudayev early Monday.

Under the Russian "zero option" initiative put forward at the peace talks Thursday, all current political leaders in the war-torn republic, including Mr. Dudayev as well as Moscow's own protégés — would resign before new elections are held.

So far Mr. Dudayev has not announced any intention to step down, unlike Russian-backed Chechen leaders Umar Avturkhanov and Salambek Khadzhiyev.

An AFP correspondent in

Grozny said the talks appeared deadlocked over Mr. Dudayev's political future and the constitutional status of Chechenya.

Russian delegation officials quoted by Interfax said a final document could be drawn up at the talks late Monday, but it would not mention Mr. Dudayev or Chechenya's status — the two key issues dividing the two sides.

Moscow has so far refused to hold direct talks with the separatist leader.

Usman Imaev, heading the Chechen delegation to the talks at the Grozny mission of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) in Europe, told Interfax that the status of Chechenya was touched Monday.

However, the status issue required lengthy discussion and a solution would not be found "today or tomorrow," Mr. Imaev said.

Chechen leaders insist on total independence for the republic, whose declaration of independence in 1991 ultimately prompted Russia to pour troops into the small

north Caucasus republic in December, triggering the six-month war which has left thousands dead.

Meanwhile, Russian delegation leader Vyacheslav Mikhailov told ITAR-TASS that Moscow "confirms the sovereignty of the Chechen Republic within the Russian Federation."

Mr. Mikhailov said the subsequent status of Chechenya would be determined after elections and the establishment of state institutions in the breakaway republic, based on a treaty between the two states.

Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said he would join the talks "when the participants reach the point of a decision."

However, he ruled out talks with Mr. Dudayev.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said the current talks were "the last chance for a political settlement of the Chechen crisis — there will be no other chance."

"The negotiations are progressing, and neither side should make a mistake. There is a need for more restraint and a genuine striving for a peaceful settle-

ment."

According to Mr. Mikhailov, both sides had "found points of contact on a whole range of issues."

The Russian delegation sent a letter to Mr. Chernomyrdin calling on him to take steps to prevent ethnic hatred, Mr. Mikhailov said, after reports had reached Grozny of Chechens being persecuted in Stavropol, Rostov and other regions of southern Russia. The reports were affecting the progress of the talks, he said.

Meanwhile, Russian military officials said four Russian troops were killed and 10 wounded in shooting by Chechen separatists Saturday and Sunday despite the ceasefire.

They said Russian positions also came under fire 26 times during the night, and that Russian forces had responded with artillery.

In Makhkety, a village 40 kilometres (25 miles) south of Grozny, Russian forces destroyed six large Chechen ammunition dumps containing hundreds of tank shells and rockets, ITAR-TASS reported.

Back me or face wipe-out, Major, Redwood say

LONDON (R) — The race to lead Britain's ruling Conservatives entered its final, frantic lap Monday with each of the contenders, John Major and John Redwood, warning that only he could save the party from electoral oblivion.

A day before the party's 329 members of parliament vote in the leadership ballot, Mr. Major warned them that the Conservative Party would be jumping into an electoral abyss if it replaced him as leader and prime minister.

"Tomorrow, it has a clear choice. It can jump into the abyss. Or it can finish the business in hand and set on with working for a better for our country," he wrote in Monday's daily telegraph newspaper.

But supporters of Mr. Redwood, a right-winger who resigned his cabinet post of Welsh secretary a week ago to challenge Mr. Major, immediately riposted, saying change was necessary if the

Conservatives were not to be wiped out at the next election.

Norman Lamont, sacked as finance minister in 1993, said that unless Mr. Major was dumped the party would share the fate of Canada's Conservatives, who were reduced to just two seats after the last election.

"The Conservative Party is facing a wipe-out, a Canadian-style defeat at the polls. Can we really go on with leadership of the kind we've in recent years?" he asked.

Tuesday's secret ballot closes at 1600 GMT and the result is expected within half an hour.

Mr. Major has repeatedly said he expects to win the contest, which he triggered on June 22 in an all-or-nothing gamble to end months of sniping by right-wing critics who accused him of weak leadership and selling out Britain's interests in Europe.

Mr. Major, from the centre of a party in power for 16 years, says only he can unite the deeply divided Conservatives and fight off Tony Blair's resurgent Labour Party, which has a steady 30-point lead in opinion polls.

Officially Mr. Major needs half the votes with a 50-vote margin over his rival to claim outright victory.

But unless he fares much better than this, party grandees may force him aside after five years in office so cabinet heavyweights such as Trade Secretary Michael Heseltine and Employment Secretary Michael Portillo can fight a second round.

"I suspect that if there are 100, 110, 120 people not voting for the prime minister, both the critics, the public and the media will say ... Hang on a minute, that is not enough," Conservative MP David Wiltshire said.

The two candidates were due to make a final plea for the support of wavering MPs

Monday when they addressed the 92 Group, a right-wing faction.

"I'm still in a state of indecision and almost despair. I have been 31 years in politics and never before been in a situation where I'm not quite sure what to do," said Sir Teddy Taylor, a "Euro-sceptic" who is nevertheless loyal to Mr. Major.

Mr. Major took comfort from a survey of 450 local Conservative Party constituencies, 92 per cent of which backed the prime minister. But several pro-Conservative newspapers said Mr. Major, who took over from Margaret Thatcher in 1990, should bow out.

"It is time for Mr. Major to go, and give another leader the opportunity to save the Tories, not least from their own divisions," the Daily Telegraph said.

"Vote Major and you let in Labour," was the front-page message from the mass-circulation Sun.

Hands off Greenpeace ship, N. Zealand warns

SYDNEY (R) — New Zealand warned France Monday not to "attack" a Greenpeace protest ship tied up off Tahiti as Pacific islanders opposing nuclear tests lifted a blockade of that French territory's roads.

The roadblocks were set up on Tahiti's last week amid mass protests held to welcome the environment group's flagship Rainbow Warrior II into the capital, Papeete, en route to France's test site at Mururoa Atoll.

In a reference to the blowing up of Greenpeace's original Rainbow Warrior flagship by French agents 10 years ago in Auckland Harbour, New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger warned: "It's up to them (Greenpeace) as to where they sail but I would sincerely hope that at no time do they come under any attack from the French authorities," Mr. Bolger told reporters.

Asked if he was making a

direct warning to France to leave the Rainbow Warrior II alone, Mr. Bolger replied: "I think they would be very unwise not to."

"They've had the enormous embarrassment of attacking one Rainbow Warrior in the South Pacific and the enormous embarrassment that created we would not want to have repeated."

A Greenpeace photographer died when the Rainbow Warrior was blown before she could set sail on a protest voyage to Mururoa on July 10, 1985. The crew of Rainbow Warrior II plan to be at Mururoa on July 10 to commemorate the bombing.

Three days of turmoil ended on Tahiti Sunday, the 29th anniversary of France's first nuclear test in the South Pacific, after the roadblocks were lifted and the protesters joined supporters in a religious service.

Refused permission to dock at Tahiti's main quay, Quai D'Honnoreur, the Rainbow Warrior II had remained in the harbour for 24 hours before tying up at a temporary anchorage in the middle of Papeete Harbour.

The ship's crew have vowed to try to stop France from going ahead with eight planned tests at Mururoa between September and next May.

The announcement of the tests last month whipped up a storm of protests throughout the South Pacific.

Australia and New Zealand have taken the strongest stands against the resumed French testing, freezing defence ties with Paris and clouding the prospects of French defence contractors.

Facing continued public outrage that culminated in the firebombing of a French consulate, the Australian government later recalled its ambassador from Paris for consultations and cancelled most military ship and aircraft visits.

Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating has also called for the 15-nation South Pacific Forum to take its case against testing directly to the French people with a publicity campaign.

Mr. Keating, who recently raised Australia's war effort on French soil in a letter published in Le Monde newspaper, fired the second shot of his personal publicity campaign Monday with a letter printed in the French daily Liberation.

Warning of mounting anger over France's refusal to back down on its decision to resume testing, Mr. Keating wrote: "The reaction is quite strong. The French government must know that if it continues in this direction, it will encounter growing opposition around the world."

Heavy equipment used to get to Seoul store victims

SEOUL (R) — Rescuers failed Monday in what might have been a final bid to find survivors from a collapsed Seoul department store when a search with heavy machinery retrieved only mangled bodies from the debris, police said.

"Sniffer dogs, seismic sound detectors and special purpose cameras could not confirm life in the rubble," a police officer told reporters.

Instead, rescuers retrieved five bodies, bringing the death toll to 112, with 381 people still missing five days after the collapse of the Sampoong Department Store.

Officials said more than 200 of the 900 people injured in the disaster were in serious condition.

Rescue officials brought in cranes, concrete cutters, forklifts and heavy drilling machines for the first time to remove chunks of concrete and steel structures that formed a pink five-storey building until Thursday's collapse.

"While the underground operation will continue to look for survivors, a search for the missing will begin today by cutting up and lifting concrete slabs of the collapsed building," said Seoul Vice-Mayor Kang Dok-Ki earlier in the day.

Rescue teams working through the tangled debris had relied so far on hand-held equipment so as not to disturb the precarious balance of the wreckage under-

ground.

They also brought in army cameras, used for detecting secret invasion tunnels built by Communist North Korea, to look for anybody still clinging to life.

"I have saved many lives in the past 30 years but it is the first time that I've seen this scale of horror," said Paik Bong-Hyon, one of 24 specialist miners helping the operation.

Witnesses said some of the bodies recovered were crushed beyond recognition.

Many relatives of the missing, whose pent-up grief turned to anger after waiting five days to hear of the fate of their loved ones, had demanded the use of heavy gear to speed the search.

Hundreds of relatives at the site in southern Seoul briefly occupied an intersection nearby Monday urging the government to do more. Some protested against the use of heavy machines.

"As efforts have concentrated on just a few places, most of the others are losing their chances of being spotted," an enraged relative said.

Rescuers had to tie wire ropes to a lift tower, left standing when the store collapsed, to prevent it collapsing on top of the debris.

At an emergency ministerial meeting Monday, Prime Minister Lee Hong-koo ordered the establishment of specialist rescue teams.

Kuchma urges West to do more for Ukraine

BONN (R) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma urged the West in an interview Monday to give his country more help or face the consequences of its financial collapse.

Mr. Kuchma, who began a four-day visit to Germany Monday, told the daily Die Welt that Ukraine could not be expected to find a way out of post-Soviet economic decline on its own.

"The West should understand this. There exists the danger that our state will collapse," he said. "If one wants a united, economically strong Ukraine ... then one must give assistance."

"You should abandon the

position of neutral observer," he added. "You should launch an active political dialogue with Ukraine. I am grateful for Germany's role, but Europe is merely standing on the sidelines."

The West, Mr. Kuchma said, had tried to impose conditions before Ukraine agreed to give up its former Soviet nuclear weapons and was doing the same thing to secure an accord on closing the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

"Our industry is feeling the loss of Eastern markets, but at the same time Western markets have been closed to us," he added.

Mr. Kuchma's visit to one

of a series of G-7 industrialised countries in recent months to win financial backing for Ukraine's late-starting reforms. He was to meet Chancellor Helmut Kohl soon after his arrival.

But diplomats say he was unlikely to get much more than moral support from Germany.

Ukrainian officials had high hopes for Mr. Kuchma's meeting with bankers and industrialists in Frankfurt Tuesday.

Another key meeting will examine Mr. Kuchma's pledge to shut Chernobyl, site of the world's worst nuclear power accident, by the year 2000. Talks with the

European Union on Ukrainian calls for Western help of up to \$4 billion have made little progress.

Mr. Kuchma launched Ukraine's first post-Soviet market reforms soon after his election last July, winning Western praise and pledges of hefty assistance from the International Monetary Fund and other institutions.

Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, in a statement issued before Mr. Kuchma's arrival, praised the reforms as "a courageous step forward."

But Mr. Kinkel also pointed out that Germany already committed three million marks (\$2.2 billion) in assistance.

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Delivered by ARAMEX

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975
مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
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Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Missed deadlines

THE MISSING of the July 1 deadline in the Palestinian-Israeli talks on the second stage of their accord is not the first of its kind. The Israeli record of dealing with the Palestinians ever since the Oslo agreement has been one of repeatedly missed deadlines. The holding of Palestinian national elections in the occupied territories is already more than one year behind schedule and the redeployment of Israeli army in the West Bank is an essential factor in the success of these elections. Earlier on in the year the two sides committed themselves to meeting the July 1 deadline to work out a final agreement on Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian cities and towns in preparation for holding the vital elections.

Both Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres tried to play down the significance of the deadline. The trouble here as we see it is both the psychological and political fallout of continuously interrupting the peace process in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Failing to meet one deadline after the other on the long and tortuous road of Israeli-Palestinian peace is having its repercussions on other tracks especially on the normalisation process in the region. The Amman economic summit on the Middle East and North Africa, on which much hope is being pinned to accelerate the normalisation process, could suffer as a consequence of delays on the Palestinian front. What Israel needs to recognise is that by continually frustrating Palestinian hopes and aspirations for an end to occupation it prolongs the conflict on the one hand and gives credence to the contention that the Jewish state is not really sincere in its quest for peace. This in turn gives ammunition to opposition to the peace process and places more pressure on the countries that have already made peace with Israel.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ONCE AGAIN, the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations over the redeployment of Israeli forces in the West Bank to make way for Palestinian national elections failed, but it is gratifying to hear both parties declare their resolve to pursue the talks until a final agreement has been reached, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Monday saying that the Israeli procrastinations and hardened stand are the stumbling block in the path, the paper said that failure to reach an acceptable formula tends to deepen the Palestinian people's frustrations and increase tension. Not only is Israel implementing its arbitrary practices against the Palestinian people. That can only increase tension and inflame the situation, said the daily. The unwarranted delays in implementing the two agreements, continued the daily, can only discourage negotiations on the other Israeli-Arab tracks and strengthen the Arab countries' belief that talks with Israel will be arduous and thorny and prolonged for no reason. The paper said the time has come for the United States, which is sponsoring the peace process, to step in and remove the Israeli obstacles and ensure the implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian agreements in full before the U.S. and Israeli elections next year. Perhaps, said the paper, Washington's announcement of July 17 as the date for an agreement between the two sides would serve as a form of pressure on the Israeli government to change its stand.

AL DUSTOUR daily discussed His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Paris Monday for talks with President Jacques Chirac and expected very fruitful results from the visit in view of the very strong ties of friendship between the two sides. Expressing Jordanian people's hope that the visit would further contribute towards stronger relations, the daily said Jordan also hopes that France, under Mr. Chirac's leadership, would take practical and effective steps to enhance the Middle East peace process through its own individual initiative and through its membership in the European Union. The Middle East years for peace and security, which are vital elements for development and prosperity, and there is no doubt that Paris is in a good position to play a leading role to help attain this objective and fulfill this dream, added the paper.

The View from Fourth Circle

The new rules of the U.S.- Mideast game

By Rami G. Khouri

THE TWO dramatic Mideast events on two consecutive days last week — the attempted assassination of the Egyptian president and the rather low key coup in Qatar — must appear rather worrisome from the perspective of Washington. After all, these events touch on perhaps the two pillars of Washington's policy towards the Middle East — Egypt and the Gulf oil producers.

Coming in the wake of the recent disturbances in Bahrain, the news from Qatar and Egypt should be taken in Washington as a sign that perhaps Washington's Mideast pillars, like its overall policy in the region, could be in need of some serious updating. It is interesting — perhaps only incredibly coincidental — that a few days after the Qatar and Egypt events the United States announced that it had "renamed" its naval forces in the Gulf and the Red Sea as the 5th Fleet.

I would suggest that what we are witnessing here is more than mere coincidence. It is the logical unfolding of a rather consistent United States policy in our region that may appear ill-advised and unfair from the perspective of most Arabs, but that appears rather functional and satisfactory from the perspective of the American government. It is probably also a good indicator of broader trends in U.S. foreign policy, based on the cold, hard calculations of narrowly defined national interest, which today means very little more than promoting the interests and profits of private corporations and the American economy as a whole.

I had the opportunity earlier this month to participate in a conference in the United States organised by one of the leading U.S. foreign relations research institutions, on the subject of reassessing U.S. policy towards the Middle East. The message that came through loud and clear from the vast majority of participants, who included individuals at the top of U.S. policy-making in the Middle East during the past two decades, was very simple: The United States has very few genuine national interests in the Middle East today other than maintaining access to some oil supplies. All other former principles and policies are subject to change, or even abandonment, if necessary.

I suspect that this is due to three basic factors: The demise of the Soviet Union, which reduced Washington's need to use conservative Arabs as a counter-force against communism in this region; the current, perhaps momentary, Israeli diplomatic triumph over the Arabs, represented by Israel's ability to isolate the Arab parties one-by-one and to sign peace accords with them individually; and, the inability of Washington and its low-income

Arab friends to improve socio-economic conditions sufficiently to reduce the Islamist wave in this region, thereby probably bringing Washington to the conclusion that some of its anti-Islamist, pro-Arab autocracy policies may have to be quietly dropped.

The Qatar "coup" is far more interesting in this respect than the assassination attempt against President Mubarak. The events in Qatar are a nuanced hint of indigenous policy changes in this region, rather than an abrupt shift. They seem to indicate a desire by some moneyed Arab parties to pursue policies that are not totally in alignment with Washington's policies, especially vis-a-vis regional security and Washington's "dual containment" policy towards Iran and Iraq.

This could be an important sign of the realisation by at least some Arab Gulf leaders that in the long run their true security lies more in coherent regional security arrangements reached with local powers than in bilateral military accords with the United States or other Western powers.

The threat to the Egyptian president suggests that his government's policies at home are not stemming the tide of economic and political frustration that has found its primary expression in two huge problems for Egypt: A violent Islamist opposition, and an albatross-like state bureaucracy that is riddled with inefficiency. Billions of dollars of annual U.S. aid and peace with Israel have not appreciably improved the situation in Egypt.

The United States itself, with its new conservative majority in Congress and its rather listless White House and foreign policy leadership team, is clearly signalling that U.S. engagement with the world will be gradually narrowed to those areas that impact directly on three U.S. interests: Access to foreign markets, access to strategic raw materials, and trading arrangements that promote jobs for Americans (or for foreigners employed by American-owned corporations). This will be expressed immediately in terms of lower foreign aid, and more gradually in terms of American disinterest in domestic affairs in Arab or other Middle Eastern states that do not directly impact on the three U.S. interests mentioned above.

I would hazard to guess that the future may look rather stark to some traditional U.S. "allies" in this region. In due time, the United States will probably quietly abandon most of its traditional friends, partners, allies, surrogates, auxiliaries, protectors and vassals in this region, while concentrating its bilateral relations on those two points of interest that really matter to it: Saudi Arabian oil and Israel.

Israel seems strong enough to take care of itself for the foreseeable future, whether or not the current peace talks flourish; and the formal presence of the U.S. 5th Fleet in the Gulf is a rather forceful signal of Washington's intent to assure continued access to Saudi Arabian oil. Should either of these interests be threatened, the United States will not hesitate to use its military forces to maintain the status quo, as it did in the Gulf war against Iraq. The corollary to this policy of occasional brutality is the policy of non-benign neglect towards others in the region who may find themselves in economic, social or political trouble. I would even predict that the United States such soon slowly reduce its ties with important, large states such as Egypt, because the cost of maintaining the status quo there will not be matched by the potential benefits — according to the new cost-benefit calculations that drive American foreign policy.

Arab states, leaderships or individuals that traditionally have relied on the United States or that are now cultivating new aid and trade relationships with it would be well advised to recognise the signs that are emerging in this region and in the United States: The long standing, generally expedient principles and exploitative policies that defined U.S. actions in the Middle East during the past half century are quickly coming to an end.

The one area in this scenario that remains unclear is Washington's policy towards Islamism, which continues to be a powerful force among many disappointed people in this region. I suspect that we are witnessing today the early outlines of a new accommodationist American policy towards the Islamists, in which the U.S. and Islamist regimes coexist on the basis of mutual respect for respective national interests — defined primarily in commercial terms by the USA and primarily in ideological terms by the Islamists. Algeria may be the first test of this new approach.

It is fascinating to watch the new dynamic of this region come into play: As the United States withdraws from its broad imperial and geo-strategic role in the Middle East, it replaces this with a more narrow approach focused on segmented commercial and resource markets; at the same time, those who have relied most on U.S. protection and support now have to forge new security relationships based on the realities of regional powers and their interests (mainly Iran, Iraq, Israel, Turkey, and perhaps Egypt and Saudi Arabia). Some Arab/Mideast parties will apply for U.S. protection, but under the new rules of the game only Israel and the eastern provinces of Saudi Arabia will qualify.

Money talking louder in Hong Kong

By Peter Lim

Agence France Presse

HONG KONG — Money talks, and it is a voice that will grow louder in Hong Kong after the two-year countdown to China's takeover from midnight on July 1, 1997 starts.

The well-off have second homes, second passports and alternative businesses. Many more are here to stay, though, and they worry about paying the rent and eating in difficult conditions Hong Kong is unused to.

"Without money you have nowhere to go," said construction worker Chan Yok-Min. "We have no option but to stay. But I don't really know what it will be like after 1997."

Mr. Chan is typical of the gloom and uncertainty being increasingly expressed.

The stock market has plunged some 25 per cent from its all-time high of 12,201.09 on January 4, 1994.

Property prices have fallen 30 per cent in three years since the government acted to cool an overheated market. But Hong Kong remains a hellishly expensive place to rent an apartment.

Retail sales in April fell 2.5 per cent against the 1994, giving a new sign of the problems, but the official annual inflation rate is still a high nine per cent.

Many residents say they are sure nothing will happen after July 1, 1997, as long as the "motherland" maintains stability and allows Hong Kong to carry on making money in the way to which it has become accustomed.

"The worse that could happen is instability in Hong Kong or in China," said waiter David Chow, "then things would come tumbling down."

Fears about the health of China's 90-year-old paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, are nothing new on rumour-fueled world financial markets. But now the news spreads like wildfire through Hong Kong. A power struggle in China could be bad for business in Hong Kong, even from a waiter's point of view.

And even China must have one eye on Hong Kong's growing unemployment rate. The territory's unions are already making threatening noises about the imported labour they were once happy to let do low-paid jobs.

Hong Kong recorded a 3.1 per cent jobless rate in April, the highest for nine years, and it has sent out growing shock waves.

Factory worker Cheung Yuet-Yuan, 38, fears he could end up in a growing queue for public assistance with her garment factory moving across the border to

China.

China's quarrel with Britain over the extent of Hong Kong's democracy, is not, on the other hand, such a great concern. The authorities still have problems encouraging the 6.1 million population to vote. Mr. Chow the waiter said sabbie rattling between governor Chris Patten and Beijing was "nothing but a dispute over economic interests."

Older people seem resigned to their fate. "We don't expect so much," said retired worker Kong Tak, 65, who spends his days playing Chinese chess in a Wanchai park with other elderly people.

"I only hope for a full stomach every day," he said. His friend, Chang Pak, 70, added: "I've been through a lot worse in the past, and 1997 is nothing in comparison."

High school student Kenneth Li said he was also not worried.

"I really don't care what happens two years from now. I think if I study harder I can get a scholarship to go to the United States, if not, I find work and make money," he said.

But many Hong Kong youth say they feel uneasy about the changeover. A recent survey of 4,208 secondary school students found 30 per cent had concerns about the change of sovereignty and another 37 per cent doubted whether life had any meaning or value.

"Schoolchildren are finding it difficult to find a role in a continually changing society," said Cheung Man-Kin, chairman of the Learner-Teachers Association, which carried out the poll.

Parents also feel the pressure. According to a recent government report, the number of people from Hong Kong applying to leave the territory has significantly increased in recent months.

Nearly 330,000 people were reported to have left in the past five years — a significant figure in a population of 6.1 million, the government admits.

For the past three years, there have been between 25,000 and 30,000 applications for visas each year. But a government official said the number was increasing and there could be 35,000 this year.

Surveys indicate that many of those with second passports will come back to a place renowned for making money.

But the government official admitted that much depends on Beijing and that "China must provide reassurances in deeds, as well as words, for Hong Kong to prosper."



M. KAHIL

Fears from GATT unfounded

By Yusuf Mansur

THE RECENT interest in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the overall repudiation about the implications of this treaty to Jordan's business sector have produced unfounded and unnecessary fears. To avoid rumours and ignorant speculations that will adversely affect the investment climate in Jordan, both the government and business sector must prepare wisely for membership in GATT.

We must prepare skillful negotiations' teams, plan our membership correctly to suit Jordan's needs in the short and the long run, and — most importantly — inform the Jordanian public of the negotiations outcomes in a timely manner. Full disclosure will better enable the business sector to deal with any future uncertainties which may arise due to changes in regulations and policies that govern Jordan's international trade.

The inception of GATT

During W.W.II, the United States, in consultation with the Allies, began preliminary work on post-war economic problems and proposed various forms of international cooperation to be implemented at the end of the war. Seven years of research and negotiations, five during the war and two immediately after, culminated in a charter for the establishment of the International Trade Organisation (ITO). Meanwhile, in 1947, while the United Nations Committee was at work drafting a charter for the ITO, international organisations were negotiating in Geneva, Switzerland, for the reduction of tariffs. The agreement that

emerged from the meeting in Geneva became known as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

In 1948, the U.S. refused to sanction the ITO. Therefore, the GATT, with the blessings of the U.S., became the only international organisation for multilateral negotiations. Nearly all advanced countries are members of GATT. Developing countries remain outside it.

GATT has recently been replaced with an organisation that falls under the auspices of the United Nations. The new organisation is called the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and its headquarters are in Geneva. WTO joins its sister organisations, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to fulfill the role of legitimate overseer of international trade. As a result of its U.N. affiliation, the WTO membership will expand to include many if not all of the U.N. member countries. Jordan applied in 1993 to join GATT and the government is considering joining the WTO.

Major provisions of GATT

The provisions of GATT are complex and detailed. Space permits only that the major provisions be listed.

— The unconditional most-favoured-nation (MFN). Each GATT member must extend any benefit, such as low tariffs, that has been extended to one GATT member to all other members. In other words, a member cannot discriminate against another member.

— National Treatment. Once a foreign company or foreign subsidiary has been allowed to operate in Jordan, it cannot be discriminated against in favour of a national firm. That means — no additional restrictions

can be imposed on a foreign firm beyond those placed on a local firm.

— Transparency. All agreements made with GATT members and other countries are to be made public knowledge. Furthermore, all countries must establish offices which are in charge of dispersing the information upon request.

— Market Access. Under this provision all countries must partake of activities which allow market access such as simplification of customs formalities, liberalisation of marks of origin requirements, freedoms of transit, reduction of monopoly powers and provision of assurances that existing monopolies will not hamper trade in related markets.

Joining the GATT is not an overnight whim, accordingly it cannot be an overnight success. As shown above, we do not forsake control of our destiny by joining GATT as some claim. On the contrary, joining GATT will teach us to prepare for negotiations, to disclose outcomes, and to cultivate further cooperation between business and government. Therefore, we must look positively upon this advancement in our global dealings. Not only will we join the ranks of professionals, and therefore, be forced to improve our quality standards, but we will also learn to budget, at least partially, our cloak and dagger business theories. Thus, a healthier and clearer future for Jordanian trade will be charted.

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The writer is professor of economics at the University of Mu'ta. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

Hizbollah helping lure tourists back to Lebanon

By John Lancaster

BAALBEK, Lebanon — Hizbollah, the militant Islamic group Party of God, which has been linked to kidnappings and bombings in Lebanon and abroad, is once again targeting the West.

Only this time, the goal is tourism.

In a bid to shore up its credentials as a legitimate political organisation and to prepare for an eventual peace treaty between Lebanon and Israel, leaders of the Hizbollah are cooperating with Lebanon's Tourism Ministry to coax Western visitors back to the famous Roman ruins at Baalbek, a party stronghold in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley.

Hizbollah officials have posted English-language signs welcoming Western tourists back to Baalbek, cooperated in the installation of lighting and sound equipment amid the ruins and generally relaxed their posture of strict Islamic vigilance, which in the past had discouraged the wearing of shorts and other emblems of Western decadence. You can even drink beer at the Palmira Hotel.

"This city should be a tourist city," a Hizbollah official told an American visitor recently over glasses of chilled strawberry juice. "We just want to say that we are civilised people, we are not monsters. We have these humble capabilities, and we are presenting them to tourists."

Hizbollah's new image may be hard for some to swallow. Since its emergence during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Hizbollah has established a reputation as one of the world's premier terrorist organisations. The Shiite Muslims revolutionaries in Hizbollah's extremist security services have been blamed for many of the most notorious episodes of the Lebanese civil war, including

kidnappings of Westerners and the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut that killed 241 people.

Unlike most of the Muslim and Christian militias that participated in the Lebanese civil war, Hizbollah has yet to disarm. Its fighters regularly inflict casualties on Israeli forces occupying southern Lebanon and occasionally fire rockets at Israeli settlements across the border, provoking retaliatory air strikes and artillery barrages.

"We are quite satisfied with the losses we are causing to our enemy," said the former Hizbollah secretary general, Sobhy Tufaily, in an interview at his heavily guarded apartment in a mostly Shiite southern suburb of Beirut.

But Mr. Tufaily, a turbaned cleric who studied Islamic theory in Iran, also tried to present a softer side of Hizbollah. He said, for example, that "from the begin-

ning, we were not against tourism or tourists" and denied involvement in hostage-taking, blaming Hizbollah's reputation for kidnappings on distortions by the Western media.

Hizbollah's image makeover is motivated by a confluence of factors that include the end of the civil war, the signing of separate peace agreements among Israel, the Palestinians and Jordan, and, perhaps most important, the prospect of a Syrian-Israeli peace treaty.

Because Syria maintains 40,000 troops in Lebanon and exercises near-absolute dominion over government decision-making, a Syrian-Israeli accord almost certainly would be followed by formal peace between Lebanon and Israel. That would clear the way for an Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

Mr. Tufaily insisted that with or without the coopera-

tion of the Syrian and Lebanese governments, Hizbollah leaders "will advise all those believers and freedom fighters to keep on struggling against the enemy."

But Hizbollah will have a hard time continuing its holy war if the Damascus government cuts off arm supplies that flow through Syria, and Mr. Tufaily seemed to acknowledge as much when he said, "In case of any peace treaty with Israel, I don't see any problem with disarming Hizbollah."

In effect, analysts here say, progress towards Middle East peace has presented Hizbollah with a choice between the margins and the mainstream of Lebanese politics — and Hizbollah is tending towards the latter.

A turning point for Hizbollah came in 1992, when the party fielded candidates in Lebanon's first postwar parliamentary election and won eight of 128 seats. With Ira-

nian financial support, Hizbollah also has vastly expanded its social-service network, digging wells, building schools and hospitals and developing an agricultural extension service to advise farmers on matters such as livestock breeding, Mr. Tufaily said.

"I think Hizbollah sees the writing on the wall, that peace will come to this part of the world and they have to adjust to it," said Adnan Iskander, a professor of political science at the American University of Beirut.

Nowhere is the contrast between Hizbollah's past and present more striking than in Baalbek, whose colossal temples of Jupiter and Bacchus were once a major tourist attraction as well as the site of an annual music festival that drew the likes of Joan Baez and Ella Fitzgerald.

Partly because of uncertainty about Hizbollah's intentions, the U.S. govern-

ment will bar its citizens from travelling to Lebanon, and a visitor's first impressions of Baalbek do not inspire confidence.

Checkpoints are manned by plainclothes security officers with submachine guns, Syrian anti-aircraft positions dot surrounding fields, and Hizbollah's bright yellow flags — each emblazoned with a clenched fist clutching an assault rifle — seem to flutter from every lamppost.

Just outside of town is a mural that shows another fist punching through Israeli and U.S. flags above the legend, "Israel must be eliminated." Posters of Iran's late religious leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, abound.

Near the entrance to the ruins, however, Hizbollah presents a gentler face: "Hizbollah welcomes you by its pioneer values" reads one English-language banner stretched across a chain-link fence. Another says: "The

message of Hizbollah to the world: Islam is the resolution of all problems."

"They want to give the image that they understand the importance of tourism, of Baalbek," said an official at the Tourism Ministry in Beirut who asked not to be identified. Similarly, he said, Hizbollah's leaders have approved the ministry's plans to resurrect the Baalbek "sound-and-light" show and install new speakers and lights.

The official acknowledged that Hizbollah "might not allow a hallel" in Baalbek's Roman amphitheatre. But he predicted that its leaders would agree to a resumption of the music festival, possibly as early as next year.

The local Hizbollah official in Baalbek, quoting a visiting European diplomat, declared: Baalbek is safer than Oklahoma.

International Herald Tribune

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The Independent

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America's decade of wars and disappearances revisited

By Joseph B. Frazier
The Associated Press

MEXICO CITY — A painful piece at a time, Central America's bloody laundry from the 1980s is being hung back out on the line.

With greater political openings and freedoms throughout the region, stories are coming out of deeds that often were covered up or only whispered about during long civil wars.

In recent years the region has evolved from one of military dictatorships to a cluster of elected democracies that, while not proud of the past, no longer appear afraid to deal with it.

And they are no longer polarised by the cold war in the name of which many atrocities were committed.

In El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, revelations of political murders, scorched earth campaigns, mass graves in clandestine cemeteries, kidnapping and torture are bringing back memories of the region's darkest decade — and, sometimes, the American role in it.

For many, the dark old days in Central America ended in 1992 with the treaty that closed out the 12-year civil war in El Salvador, the most visible of the region's conflicts in the 1980s.

Over, maybe. But vivid in memory. Only recently has the civilian government of Honduras dared to take on the powerful army as it distances itself from its military-dominated past.

The government announced in 1993 that it was opening an investigation into an army unit trained and financed by the CIA that tortured and killed suspected leftists during the 1980s. At least 184 remain missing.

After a recent series in the sun of Baltimore highlighting the existence of the unit, the government said it was inves-

tigating more than 100 military officers tied to the unit and had asked Washington to declassify some documents to help in the probe.

A Honduran human rights group is demanding an investigation of the vice president, Gen. Walter Lopez Reyes, who headed the military in 1984-1986. The demand would have been unthinkable — and dangerous — in the 1980s.

The Honduran attorney general's office now accuses the military, which has offered to open its files, of destroying records to protect officers who may have been involved.

In El Salvador, the Boston-based Physicians for Human Rights is conducting DNA tests to help find children kidnapped as infants during military offensives more than a decade ago.

So far two children, now in their early teens, have been matched through DNA tests to parents. One child's mother, Magdalena Ramos, has not been seen since she and her 2-week-old daughter were taken away by helicopter in 1982 in embattled Chalatenango province.

Such things were covered up and generally unreported during the war.

Her daughter, Magdalena Emperatriz, has been in an orphanage since. "We want to know what happened to the mother of Magdalena Emperatriz. Her family and her daughter have a right to know what the army did with her," said the Rev. Jon Cortina, head of El Salvador's Association in Search of Disappeared Children.

The DNA match was made through the girl's father. There are possibly hundreds of Magdalena Emperatriz.

At least 54 children were taken during that military offensive alone. Most families in El Salvador lost someone killed or missing in a war

that took 75,000 lives and displaced 1 million people.

In neighbouring Guatemala, where once such information would have been kept secret, the federal prosecutor's office now announces the discovery of mass graves — most recently one with 40 skeletons. The graves are the legacy of the scorched earth policies of military governments during the 1980s.

An American congressman recently charged that a Guatemalan colonel, Julio Roberto Alpirez, allegedly in the pay of the CIA, was involved in the murders of a guerrilla married to an American lawyer and of an American innkeeper.

The military maintains that the rebel, Efraim Bamaca, died in a battle in 1992. But at least two witnesses have said they saw him alive in army custody and badly tortured after the battle.

The army has sought to prevent the exhumation of an area thought to contain the remains of Bamaca, who was married to American Attorney Jennifer Harbury.

That the investigation is continuing at all is a major change from the ways of Guatemala in its recent past. A special prosecutor has been appointed and Col. Alpirez has been suspended.

The innkeeper, Michael Devine, was slain in the northern department of Peten in 1990 near a military base.

In a shock to many Guatemalans, the U.S. government has ordered an investigation into its own possible role in the bloodshed of the 1980s.

"We are surprised by the unexpected interest of the government of the United States in the participation of the CIA... because it has always been known," said Ninth Montenegro, coordinator of the Mutual Support Group, an organisation of relatives of Guatemalans who have disappeared.

might since Mr. Mubarak accused Mr. Taurah of planning the attempt on his life.

The charges, threats by Sudan to tamper with the Nile River and skirmishes last week over Halaib have created the biggest crisis in decades between the two neighbours.

Both countries have sought to use the dispute to rally support. But in recent days, Sudan has turned the perceived Egyptian threat into a crusade, vowing to turn Halaib into a graveyard. Protests and angry speeches have occurred daily, despite statements by Egyptian officials that military action was never an option.

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They declared their readiness "to fight with God to defend Sudan" and waved banners saying: "May a dry storm blow pharaoh away," "Oh Mubarak you coward, the fighters are in the battlefield."

As Gen. Bashir toured in an open-top car, they burned pictures of Sudan's opposition leaders including the head of the southern rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). John Garang.

Israel's proxy army 'runs out of control'

Robert Fisk, in Shaqra, asks what price peace in southern Lebanon when mortar bombs do the talking

WARREN CHRISTOPHER, The U.S. Secretary of State, had just left (occupied) Jerusalem for home in the belief that "the chances for peace" are higher than at any time in the past 36 months, but Amal Marouni's mother did not agree.

"How do you think I feel about peace when I have carried the corpse of my own daughter?" she asked. And there, in the shady yard of her home in southern Lebanon, less than a mile from the Israeli artillery base whose mortar killed her 12-year-old daughter, there was no obvious reply.

Just outside the gate, you could still see where the proximity-fused 81mm mortar bomb exploded, two metres off the ground, tearing Amal Marouni apart as she played with her friend Maseia Islami, 12, while waiting to visit the local Hussainiya for Ashoura prayers.

"Proximity fuses are intended to cause maximum human loss of life," Commandant George Kerton of the U.N. Irish battalion stated bluntly as he looked at the huge gashes in the walls of the little Shaqra houses. You didn't want to know what it must have done to Amal Marouni.

True, the 20-man SLA platoon — most of them Shiahs like Amal's father — still feign ignorance of Amal's death. Other SLA men

who, according to her mother: "Always said her prayers, fasted at Ramadan and wore hijab covering." Neighbours described how she lived for a few seconds after the blast, crawling in blood across the road to their front door.

Neither the Israelis, who pay, arm and command the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia which fired the mortar, nor the villages of Shaqra, nor the Hizbollah militia which fired Katyusha rockets into Galilee in retaliation for Amal Marouni's death, dispute the basic facts. A mortar in the SLA's position below the Israeli frontier east of the village — DFF-30 is the U.N.'s designation, standing for "de facto forces" — fired six bombs into Shaqra just after 7pm on 30 May; three had proximity fuses, one of these killed Amal.

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was a 'mistake' by the SLA. But the SLA wouldn't fire a single bullet without Israeli orders."

The SLA, it should be added, killed a little boy with rifle fire in a nearby village two years ago almost to the day, and shelled to death two young girls in a neighbouring field four years ago. The Israeli-paid militia is now so undisciplined that only 11 days ago one of them ended an argument with comrades in an Israeli front-line position by shooting four of them dead and wounding another two before trying to kill himself.

Maissa Islami, Amal's friend, was wounded in the May 30 bombardment and had her right leg amputated below the knee.

"There was blood everywhere when I got to the street," Mohammad Marouni said. "My wife lifted Amal up but she was dead. We thought this area was safe from shells but never thought the Israelis would use proximity fuses. Aren't they a prohibited weapon?"

The Independent

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Assailants were Egyptian — Ethiopia

(Continued from page 1)

or later the Egyptian authorities would stop spreading these fabricated stories."

"Nonetheless, it is now appearing that the Egyptian appetite for the fabrication of lies in connection with the crime committed by Egyptian terrorists is proving to have no limit and they have at this point reached a stage where Ethiopia can no longer refrain from putting the record straight."

Results of the investigation into the ambush would be made public as they became available, the statement added.

Security forces had found the explosives in a diplomatic bag at the hiding place where the three gunmen were killed, the radio said. It did not say which mission the bag was from.

It said the explosives were safely detonated but gave no details.

Ethiopian officials said on Sunday security forces were searching for two of the attackers "with full vigour" but would not say where the manhunt was concentrated or how big it was.

State-run Ethiopian radio said Ethiopian security forces had safely detonated explosives found in a diplomatic bag at an Addis Ababa hide-out where three of the would-be assassins were killed on

Saturday.

Sudan meanwhile called for Arab League mediation to prevent an escalation in its crisis with Egypt.

The Sudanese ambassador in Cairo, Ahmad Al Tayeh Al Kordofani, told reporters his country was "eager to prevent the situation degenerating and to contain the crisis."

It wants Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid "to use his good offices," he said, after meeting the 22-member organisation's chief.

Sudan has protested to the U.N. Security Council after clashes last week in the disputed border territory of Halaib during which Khartoum says a Sudanese officer and two policemen were killed.

Thousands of soldiers and militiamen, some wearing thongs and dirty, tattered uniforms, marched through the Sudanese capital, promising to repulse any attempt by Egypt to seize a desolate, disputed border region.

Chants of "God is great" reverberated through a huge park as soldier after soldier raised Kalashnikov rifles in front of Sudan's military leader, Lieutenant-General Omar Al Bashir, and Sheikh Hassan Taurabi, the Islamic cleric considered the real power.

It was the biggest display of

might since Mr. Mubarak accused Mr. Taurah of planning the attempt on his life.

The charges, threats by Sudan to tamper with the Nile River and skirmishes last week over Halaib have created the biggest crisis in decades between the two neighbours.

Both countries have sought to use the dispute to rally support. But in recent days, Sudan has turned the perceived Egyptian threat into a crusade, vowing to turn Halaib into a graveyard. Protests and angry speeches have occurred daily, despite statements by Egyptian officials that military action was never an option.

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Israel ready to quit most villages

(Continued from page 1)

the area were completed, he said.

Israel wants to keep control of the last remaining town of Hebron, where 450 Jews live amidst 110,000 Palestinians, during the interim stage of Palestinian autonomy which is supposed to last until May 1999.

Mr. Rabin said the army wants to leave most of the 450-odd villages in the West Bank and said Israel wanted only "freedom of action" like the pursuit of attackers

— in areas it vacates.

"The problem is not a permanent presence," he said.

Arafat spokesman Marwan Kanafani would not comment on Mr. Rabin's statements, saying the Palestinians were waiting for concrete proposals when the negotiations resume.

"The Israelis know our position very well and we hope they are coming up with something new," he said.

An Israeli source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Israel would seek to

'Syria drops symmetry demand'

(Continued from page 1)

veys to serve as early warning.

"Syria affirmed that Israeli occupation should be eliminated totally and that it will never accept the presence of even one Israeli soldier on its lands," Tishreen said.

The paper said that taking into consideration Israel's "huge conventional and unconventional arsenal" of weapons, its security demands were unjustified.

"Syria also has its security concerns. Elimination of these concerns could be achieved with parity in any arrangements which should be made.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Hafez Al Assad praised U.S. President Bill Clinton's efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East, his spokesman said.

The spokesman, Jouhar Kourieh, said Mr. Assad told Mr. Clinton in a message marking the U.S. July 4 independence day that he wished "to continue to work with the U.S. president to achieve a just, comprehensive and durable peace in the region."

He said the Syrian leader "expressed his appreciation over efforts being exerted by Clinton to achieve this objective."

2 Israeli soldiers killed

(Continued from page 1)

Secretary-General Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said in an interview in the Beirut daily Al Nahar.

An Israeli army spokesman said: "First Sergeant Major Subhi Ahmad Abu Hamad, 43, and Staff Sergeant Yaniv Sasson, 20, were killed this morning by an explosion from a bomb set off next to an army force during an oper-

timetahle, demanding the right to halt the pullout process if there are attacks by militants against Israelis.

By next year, Israel and the PLO are to launch negotiations on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza. Those talks will tackle the

American professionals in Amman for first-hand data on business climate

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A group of 18 American businessmen and professionals on Monday wound up what organisers described as a most satisfying first-hand information on the business and investment climate in the Kingdom after listening to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan in New York in May.

The group included medium-level executives from American giants such as Time-Warner and GM as well as lawyers, accountants and financial consultants, said David P. Stone, an attorney-at-law from New York, who, along with Michael Dabit, a Jordanian lawyer, put together the trip.

American as well as European businessmen have taken a strong interest in the opportunities in Jordan following the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in October. Serious negotiations are under way on several major projects.

The highlight of the U.S. group's visit to Jordan was a working dinner on Sunday with Ahmad Mango, economic advisor to the Crown Prince. Central Bank of Jordan Deputy Governor Michael Marto, Royal Scientific Society President Hani Mulki and Munther Haddadin, a senior Jordanian negotiator and water expert, and Jordanian businessmen, said Mr. Stone.

"The meeting was very rewarding and enlightening for the group," Mr. Stone told the Jordan Times before the group headed for Petra and thereafter to Israel across the Araba crossing.

The group members were "assured of the stability of business in Jordan,"

and "we could see that some of them already launched serious contacts with Jordanian counterparts" during the meeting, he said.

"Jordan is the place to do business in the Middle East today," said Mr. Stone of Weil, Gotshal and Manges. "It is one of the most hospitable countries in the region by all counts."

"Although Jordan and Israel were the ones who signed the peace treaty, investment in Jordan as a result of the stability that the peace treaty has brought in is of interest beyond the borders of the two countries," said Mr. Stone.

The visit was arranged after Crown Prince Hassan addressed American businessmen in New York in mid-May. The Crown Prince spoke in detail of Jordan's economic strategies and called for efforts to ensure the success of the Middle East and North Africa economic summit to be held in Amman later this year even before it takes place.

According to Mr. Stone and Mr. Dabit, who runs the law firm Michael Dabit and Associates in Amman, visits similar to the American group's and encounters like Sunday's would go a long way in developing American business interest in Jordan.

"The (Clinton) administration is doing its part, but, given the size of the United States, it takes a personal touch to convince American businessmen to take the initiative of coming to Jordan to see for themselves what kind of conditions exist here, what is the legal framework and what kind of encouragement the government is willing to offer," said Mr. Stone.

On all the three counts, the group "was satisfied," he added. "A close look at how things are conducted in Amman is an indication of the favourable conditions that exist here."

As to the legal framework and incentives, the officials who met the group on Sunday explained in depth the measures the government is adopting to encourage foreign investors to come to Jordan.

"They all promised to do whatever they could do to facilitate things further for foreign investors," said Mr. Stone, who joined hands with Mr. Dabit at the Casablanca economic summit held last year.

The New York attorney said many members of the group wanted to come back to Amman for the Middle East and North Africa economic summit to be held in October.

Some members of the businessmen and professionals in the group are also members of the Washington Institute for Policy and Foreign Relations, which will hold a meeting in Amman in September.

The American team included real-estate developers, banking experts, international capital networks, security systems, shipping and automobile, businessmen, textile industrialists, accountants, owners of supermarkets, and legal consultants.

Mr. Stone and Mr. Dabit, who have set up a joint project to arrange business contacts between Jordanian and American firms and to offer expert legal advice, believe that it is possible to launch Jordanian-U.S. joint ventures and have the stocks of such firms listed in the New York Stock exchange.

"It can be done if the proper groundwork is laid after detailed studies are made," said Mr. Stone.

Lebanese investors switch to short-term paper

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese investors worried about presidential elections in November are switching to short-term paper to ensure liquidity if a political crisis develops, bankers say.

Investor behaviour is radically different from 1993 and 1994 when huge confidence in billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri and attractive yields led to heavy commitments in one- and two-year Lebanese pound treasury bills, they said recently.

Banks then invested more than half their treasury-bill (T-bill) portfolios in two-year bills — Lebanon's longest fixed-interest paper.

Today three-month bills yielding nearly 20 per cent are far the most popular. There are few takers for 12-

and 24-month T-bills although yields are up to 26.45 per cent. Banks also buy the bank of Lebanon's 45- and 60-day CDs at 16 and 17 per cent.

"People are worried about the presidential elections in November, so they are positioning themselves in anticipation and going into short-term instruments," a representative of an international bank in Beirut said.

"The general idea is to be liquid when the election occurs," another banker told Reuters. This means investors will be better placed than before to switch to U.S. dollars if a political crisis develops, the bankers said.

Banks have been switching for several weeks to three-month T-bills after two years

of buying two-year T-bills.

"So they are not yet as liquid as they might be, but they are more liquid than before and they will be positioned to go into dollars more strongly than before," a banker said.

Beirut banks discovered the dangers of over-exposure in longer-term bills in two crises involving Mr. Hariri that shook confidence in political stability and in the pound, he said.

Resignation bids by Mr. Hariri in December and May forced the bank of Lebanon to sell \$340 million and \$400 million from its reserves as investors dumped the pound and switched to dollars.

Since the average deposit in Lebanon is 42 days, the banks' found their huge mismatches made them vulner-

able in the crises.

When depositors asked banks for their money, to switch to dollars, the banks lacked liquidity and had to go to the Bank of Lebanon to discount T-bills or borrow on repurchase agreements.

"The banks were very, very heavily penalised in May when the central bank jacked the repurchase rate up to 160 per cent from 30 per cent," the banker said.

"I know of one bank which lost \$600,000 in one day due to the high repo rate. Altogether, Lebanese banks lost say \$6-7 million because of it," he said.

Investor concern over the elections focuses mainly on the possibility that political infighting could paralyse Lebanon for weeks, and no

worry that a new president might oppose Mr. Hariri's reappointments as prime minister.

Another banker, however, was confident that any difficulties in November will be quickly resolved, as in May and December.

"I think people realise now that if anything happens it will only be for a few days," he said. "If the situation does not become alarming I think people will be tempted to renew their T-bill investment. The rates are high and they should stay there to keep attracting people."

"After all, Libor is only six per cent on dollar investments, so who wants that when they can get 20 or 26 per cent on the Lebanese pound," he said.

New Qatari ruler launches economic reforms, stock market

DOHA (AFP) — Qatar's new ruler on Monday launched reforms to revive the economy, endorsing a long-awaited bourse project which dealers expected to boost domestic investment and stimulate the stagnant stocks sector.

Less than a week after he overthrew his father in a bloodless coup, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani issued a law establishing a formal stock exchange that is deemed necessary, it added.

The Qatari cabinet approved the Doha-based bourse project last year after the monetary authority (Central Bank) completed relevant laws.

But it had still to be ratified

ment opportunities to serve the national economy and strengthen cooperation with the foreign financial markets," the agency said.

It said the market would be supervised by the finance and economy minister and trading would be initially confined to local institutions.

But dealing could cover shares from Gulf and other countries in line with a cabinet decision if it is deemed necessary, it added.

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by the former emir, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani, who was ousted Tuesday while on private trip to Switzerland.

Sheikh Hamad, who has virtually run Qatar over the past two years, said he had to topple his father, citing unspecified difficult conditions.

"The approval of the stock market by the new ruler so quickly shows he is determined to revive Qatar's economy that has been affected by low oil prices over the past few years," a Gulf-based economist said.

"It was apparent he was referring to difficult economic conditions. I think there

will be more economic moves during his reign."

Qatar has produced over 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil over the past year but low prices have sharply slowed down its economy and created persistent deficits in its budget and balance of payments.

While other Gulf Arab oil producers have either embarked on reforms or announced plans to offset the damage of weak oil prices, there had been no indications Qatar intended to follow suit in the near future.

Economists said new moves by Sheikh Hamad could also include an improvement of investment laws, which they blamed for scaring away foreign capital.

"Another thing is that we are going to see an acceleration in the implementation of the liquefied natural gas project," an expert said, referring to the multi-billion-dollar venture to tap the huge North Field.

The project, costing more than \$10 billion, will eventually produce around 16 mil-

lion tonnes of LNG, fetching Qatar nearly half its current income, according to bankers. The government has already secured buyers from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India and Turkey.

The absence of a stock market in Qatar and the small number of trading institutions, which did not exceed 12 at the end of 1994, have made sharedealing the lowest in the Middle East, brokers in the region said.

"Dealing in Qatar is negligible compared to other Gulf states. Only a handful of institutions trade their shares and their value is very low. But it will likely be activated by the creation of the bourse," said Zuhair Kaswani, a United Arab Emirates (UAE) stockbroker.

Qatar is the fourth, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) state to set up an official exchange. Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain have active markets while the UAE is planning to open a floor and dealing in Saudi Arabia is conducted through the most sophisticated bank network in the region.

U.S. offshore firm in Jordan doubles capital and reserves

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The first offshore company in Jordan on Monday announced that its capital and reserves had been raised to more than \$50 million with an injection of \$24 million by its holding group in the United States.

The infusion of fresh capital to International Marine and General Insurance Company Limited will enable the firm to expand its business in the Middle East and also invest in Jordan and elsewhere in the region, said Wasef S. Jabseh, chairman and chief executive officer of the company.

International Marine and General, established in 1991, was the first offshore company to be set up in Jordan. An American holding company, HCC Insurance Holdings Incorporated, one of the fast-growing groups in the U.S. acquired the firm in 1994 and retained its manage-

ment under Mr. Jabseh, who was also appointed a member of the HCC board of directors.

"The increase in capital will help boost confidence in the company among our major clients," who include giant oil firms, shipowners and airlines which have hundreds of millions of insurance business every year, Mr. Jabseh told the Jordan Times.

International Marine and General, which does not operate locally in Jordan, offers worldwide insurance coverage for ships, oil rigs and installations, oil shipments as well as aircraft. It describes itself as a "property and casualty insurance company specialising in marine, offshore energy, property and onshore energy insurance worldwide, with emphasis on business emanating from the Middle East, East Asia and Africa."

Mr. Jabseh said the additional capital, which raised International Marine and General's total assets to

over \$50 million and total investments to over \$70 million, will be used for "high quality, investment grade, fixed income securities" both in Jordan as well as other countries in the region.

He did not spell out the investment possibilities that the company was studying in Jordan.

HCC Insurance Holdings has a record of "above market" performance in the U.S. and its stocks are listed at the New York Stock Exchange.

General "represents the largest American investment in insurance business in the Arab World," said Mr. Jabseh. Market analysts noted that the infusion of additional funds came as the region is gearing up for a boom in business in the wake of the breakthroughs in the Arab-Israeli peace process and interpreted it as yet another sign of the growing American business interest in Jordan and in the region.

Overspending, subsidies keep UAE deficit high

ABU DHABI (AFP) — High spending on development coupled with inadequate taxes and generous government subsidies have kept pressure on the UAE coffers creating a high budget deficit, the state-run Emirates Industrial Bank (EIB) said Monday.

Over the past five years, development expenditure has exceeded the deficit in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the EIB said in its weekly bulletin.

This combined with high state subsidies, lack of fees on some services and weak

oil prices has kept the deficit as high as 10 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) since 1990, the report said.

"The UAE should search for a more solid ground for its financial accounts, rationalise expenditure, introduce fees on roads and other government facilities, stop subsidies and start privatisation," it said.

"To have a deficit because of high spending on development is economically justifiable but not in the long run as revenues will recede sooner or later."

The study put actual spending in 1994 at around \$4.5 billion (\$14.85 billion) and revenues at nearly \$3.6 billion (\$10.51 billion), leaving a deficit of \$0.9 billion (\$2.35 billion).

The deficit accounted for nearly 11.8 per cent of the 1994 GDP compared with 12.3 per cent in 1993.

The decline was mainly because of a nominal growth in the GDP to \$37.8 billion (\$131 billion) from around \$33 billion (\$123 billion), the report showed.

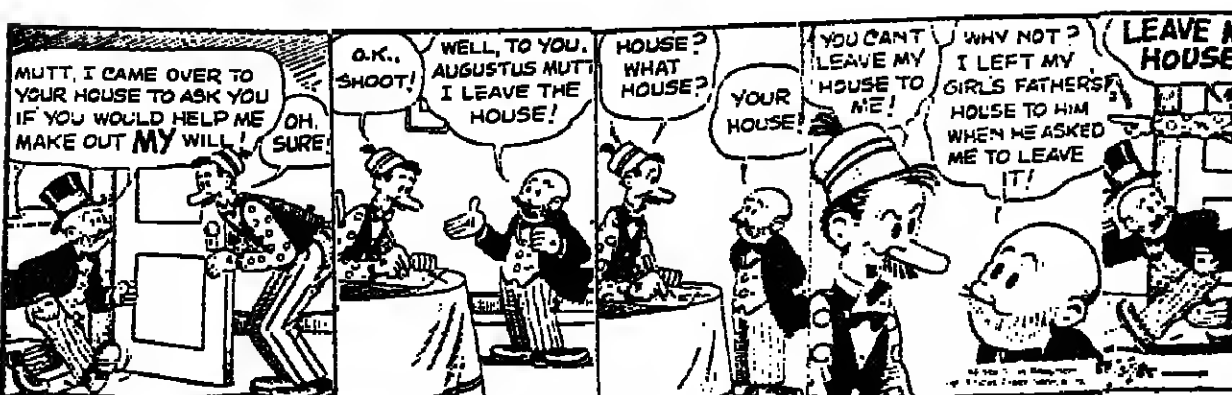
Peanuts



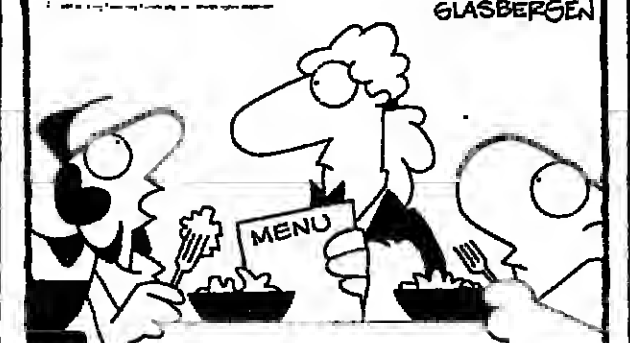
Andy Capp



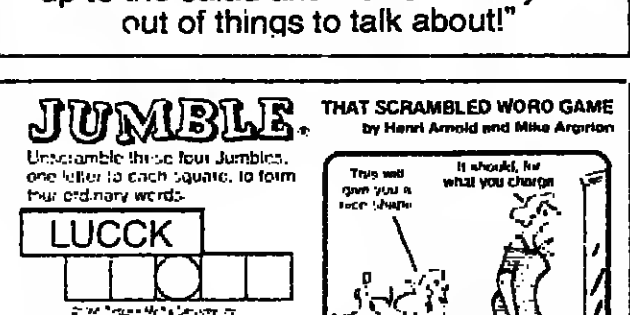
Mutt'n'Jeff



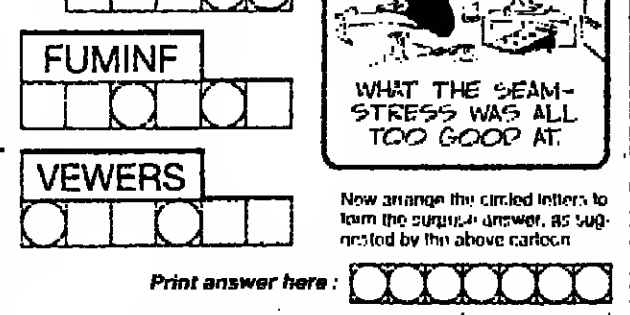
THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

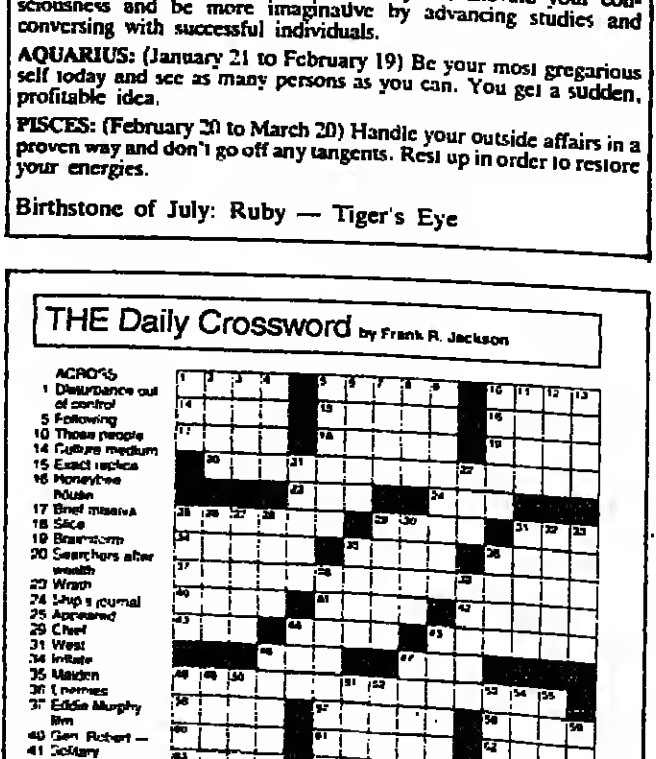


THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

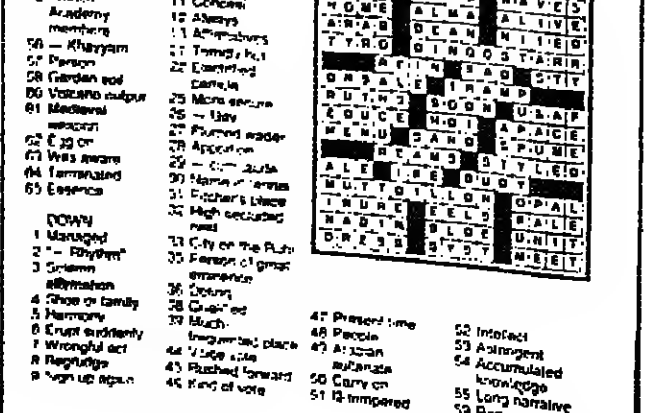


Print answer here: _____

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson



Saturday's Puzzle solved:



Business Daily Beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Contractors want role in preparing for MENA summit

The Jordanian Contractors Association urged the parties preparing for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit, which will be held in Amman in October, to take into consideration the important role of contractors in the development process and their expected role in carrying out projects which will be proposed at the summit. President of the association Mohammad Murad said the association should be one of the main parties involved in preparing for the summit. He said the association was currently unable to answer the many inquiries it was receiving about the summit from local, Arab and foreign parties because it did not have the needed information, saying all the information the association gets is from the press (Al Aswaq).

Stainless steel demand, investments increase in Asia

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Asia's consumption of stainless steel is poised to expand more than 50 per cent to six million tonnes a year between now and 2000 as demand increases for products ranging from cars to cutlery, an expert said. As more developed economies such as South Korea and Taiwan mature and their growth slows, new fast-growing economies such as Malaysia and Thailand are driving up the use of stainless steel, said Peter Peel of the British steel firm Avesta Sheffield. In a presentation at a steel industry conference, Mr. Peel said consumption of the alloy would grow to 6.06 million tonnes by 2000 from 3.915 million tonnes in 1995, an increase of 55 per cent. "As living standards improve and demand grows for goods like cars and microwave ovens, and as more people go out to eat, there will be greater demand for stainless steel," Mr. Peel told Asia's steel sector representatives. China's consumption growth is expected to average 11.3 per cent annually to reach 1.1 million tonnes. Japan, Asia's largest user of stainless steel, will average 3.9 per cent growth in consumption to 1.79 million tonnes. Taiwan's consumption of stainless steel in 2000 was put at 990,000 tonnes, growing at an average annual rate of 8.4 per cent, and South Korea's is to expand 8.2 per cent to 930,000 tonnes. Thailand's consumption will grow the fastest at an annual average of 14.3 per cent to 290,000 tonnes, Indonesia's at 13.5 per cent to 150,000 tonnes and India's at 8.2 per cent to 450,000 tonnes, Mr. Peel said. Growth was forecast to peak by 1996-1997 followed by a slowdown. "A major factor in this will be slower growth in the United States as exports to America are an important driver in economies such as Korea and Taiwan," Mr. Peel told representatives of the Asian steel sector. The first commercial stainless steel, chrome steel that resists rust or tarnish, was invented by Harry Brearley in Sheffield in 1913 as a spin-off from his research into improved steels for guns. World production of stainless steel grew from one million tonnes in 1950 to 13 million tonnes in 1994. Mr. Peel attributed stainless steel's growing popularity to the development of increased production scales and new technology that had reduced production costs and price levels. He also cited the metal's resistance to corrosion, temperature tolerance, and its hygienic and aesthetic appeal and durability. The steel executive said the industry faced some threats, such as the ignorance of the latest design criteria and fabrication techniques, and possibly high prices of important alloying elements such as nickel and chrome. But such threats were outweighed by factors contributing to growth in its consumption, Mr. Peel said, citing a planned increase in Asia's steel smelting capacity by an estimated 20 per cent a year to 1998. The increase in melting capacity is required to feed the growth in the production of finished stainless steel goods.

EU says support grows for financial services deal

BRUSSELS (R) — Support appears to be growing for an interim deal that would liberalise world financial services, a European Commission spokesman said on Monday. Although the United States remains steadfast in its opposition to a trade pact, the spokesman said other countries were considering proposals for a multi-year plan to increase access to financial services. "Most members are in favour of an interim package," the spokesman said. He noted, however, that the specifics of such a plan had yet to be worked out and would be of little use without the participation of the United States. European Union Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan is to meet U.S. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin in Washington on July 24 in hopes of reaching a deal. Officials said Mr. Rubin has made it clear he wanted to "keep the lines of communication open." In addition, a spokesman said Mr. Rubin had assured the EU that its financial interests in the United States would not be adversely affected by differences over trade liberalisation. Efforts to finalise an agreement were thrown off course on Thursday when the United States unexpectedly announced it would not grant access to its financial services market on a non-discriminatory basis. However, some 80 countries backed an EU proposal on Friday to extend the trade deadline until July 28. Officials said the EU was hoping to consolidate and improve the trade offers of all World Trade Organisation members, encourage EU states to continue with their proposals.

Jordan offers JD 10 m of certificates of deposit

AMMAN (R) — The Central Bank of Jordan said on Monday it was offering banks JD 10 million (\$14.4 million) in certificates of deposit (CD) in this week's auction, a move reflecting lower pressure to absorb liquidity. CD interest yields released on Monday from last week's auction fell at the lower end to 8.00 per cent from 8.15 per cent for three-month paper, while the upper ceiling stood at 8.25 per cent, unchanged from a week earlier. Yields on six month certificates were still at a high of 8.50 per cent, unchanged from a week earlier. However, Central Bank officials told Reuters yields fell to a 8.00 per cent average as intense competition from banks to subscribe to the last issue allowed the bank to accept lower bids. Some bankers saw the slight drop in yields as a relaxation of a tight monetary policy to shore up the dinar against the U.S. dollar and control inflation. CDs stood at JD 190 million (\$274 million) from JD 196 million (\$283 million) the previous week. The bank said last week's JD 15 million issue (\$21.6 million) was oversubscribed, an indication commercial banks find current yields attractive. Closing day for CD bids are next Wednesday, banks are to tell the results on Thursday and CDs are officially issued on Saturday. Minimum purchases are JD 100,000 (\$144,508). Repurchase agreements as collateral to the CDs also remained unchanged at 9.00 per cent. The discount rate remained fixed at 8.5 per cent.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

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HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - BHMEISANI			
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 03/07/1995			
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PLC	120	26350	220.000 219.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	8081	36924	4.570 4.570
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	500	680	1.360 1.360
THE HOUSING BANK	2582	47770	8.230 8.200
JORDAN SAVING BANK	3629	10267	2.830 2.830
JORDAN GULF BANK	1242	1606	1.300 1.310
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	8271	31296	3.740 3.780
BUSINESS BANK	1000	3950	3.950 3.950
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	450	1931	4.300 4.290
BEIT KHALIL SAVING/INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	600	2211	3.650 3.720
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	500	568	1.120 1.140
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	19350	32258	1.660 1.670
BANKS SECTOR	49643	195975	INDEX NUMBER: 181.80
			CHANGE: -0.11%
JORDAN INSURANCE	2000	6520	3.260 3.260
JORDAN FIRE INSURANCE	550	1430	2.640 2.600
JORDAN GULF INSURANCE	150	480	3.370 3.200
INSURANCE SECTOR	2836	8957	INDEX NUMBER: 134.87
			CHANGE: -0.18%
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	64284	110787	1.710 1.730
JORDAN NATIONAL SHIPPING LINES	250	700	2.770 2.800
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	3050	7113	2.300 2.350
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	2500	2900	1.160 1.170
JORDAN PRESS & PUBLISHING/AD-DUSTOUR	1900	14400	8.000 7.600
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMERCE HOTELS	12250	27293	2.210 2.290
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	21050	69523	3.320 3.360
SERVICES SECTOR	105284	232770	INDEX NUMBER: 133.38
			CHANGE: +0.89%
JORDAN TOBACCO & CIGARETTES	32	800	25.000 25.000
ATTANQEEH CONST. MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	500	610	1.200 1.220
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	8942	34128	3.330 3.820
JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES	4800	14791	3.050 3.080
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1594	16693	10.490 10.470
THE INDUSTRIAL COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL	500	1700	3.400 3.400
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	5543	2785	5.050 5.030
JORDAN OILY	115	275	2.400 2.400
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	1500	3960	2.640 2.640
SPINNING & WEAVING	1350	2824	2.200 2.200
DAR AL DAMA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	892	7018	7.900 7.870
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	4337	3714	7.750 7.770
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	500	2880	5.750 5.750
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	14750	7705	1.500 1.530
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	2200	3085	1.400 1.410
WATER INDUSTRIES	14418	17287	1.200 1.210
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	2000	4589	2.310 2.350
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JINCO	2000	1280	1.640 1.640
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	1000	1690	1.750 1.690
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	12250	39853	3.250 3.270
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	1200	2631	2.170 2.200
JORDAN NEW CABLE COMPANY	26250	50916	1.910 1.950
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	107389	246368	INDEX NUMBER: 132.46
			CHANGE: +0.04%
GRAND TOTAL	264952	684069	INDEX NUMBER: 157.36
			CHANGE: +0.02%
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET		172849	
VALUE TRADED IN PARALLEL MARKET		197046	

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Financial Markets

In co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close 30/6/95	Tokyo Close 30/6/95
Sterling Pound	1.5950	1.5938**
Deutsche Mark	1.3815	1.3815
Swiss Franc	1.1485	1.1480**
French Franc	4.8415	4.8425**
Japanese Yen	84.65	84.75
European Currency Unit	1.3333	1.3323**

USD Per STD
** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Exchange Rate Index Rates

Currency	1 MYR	3 MYRS	6 MYRS	12 MYRS
U.S. Dollar	5.81	5.75	5.68	5.68
Sterling Pound	6.43	6.75	6.93	7.31
Deutsche Mark	4.37	4.37	4.37	4.50
Swiss Franc	2.87	2.87	2.93	3.12
French Franc	6.93	6.75	6.56	6.43
Japanese Yen	1.06	0.93	0.81	0.81
European Currency Unit	6.14	6.12	6.21	6.34

Source: M&I rates for accounts covering U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6920	0.6940
Sterling Pound	1.1018	1.1073
Deutsche Mark	0.5001	0.5056
Swiss Franc	0.6019	0.6049
French Franc	0.1428	0.1435
Japanese Yen	0.8145	0.8195
Dutch Guilder	0.4466	0.4488
Swedish Krona	0.0424	0.0425
Italian Lira	0.0424	0.0425
Belgian Franc	0.0424	0.0425

Per 100

Exchange Rates

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8190	1.8320
Lebanese Lira	0.041935	0.042950
Saudi Riyal	0.1842	0.1859
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3000	2.3620
Qatari Riyal	0.1889	0.1902
Egyptian Pound	0.1900	0.2160
Omani Riyal	1.7890	1.7970
UAE Dirham	0.1878	0.1890
Greek Drachma	0.2765	0.2865
Cypriot Pound	1.4875	1.5750

Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3698/08	Canadian dollar
	1.3820/30	Deutschemarks
	1.5478/88	Dutch guilders
	1.1476/86	Swiss francs
	28.41/45	Belgian francs
	8.4800/50	French francs
	1629.4/4.4	Italian lire
	84.70/80	Japanese yen
	7.2625/25	Swedish crowns
	6.1570/20	Norwegian crowns
	5.3935/85	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.5938/48	
One ounce of gold	\$384.35/384.65	

**** JORDANIAN TRUCKS** are not allowed to travel into the Palestinian self-rule areas because Jordan and Israel did not yet sign a trade agreement to organise trade exchange and the movement of goods between the two countries, informed sources said. The sources said it was possible that Jordanian trucks would be allowed into the self-rule areas after the signing of the trade agreement. Israel still controls the borders between the self-rule areas and neighbouring countries (Al Dustour).

**** THE GENERAL** constituent assembly of the Jordan Specialised Investments Company on Sunday officially announced the establishment of the company with a total capital of JD 4 million. The company's field of work will include establishing various industrial, commercial, agricultural and real estate companies (Al Aswaq).

**** THE PALESTINE** National Authority (PNA) has approved the transport protocol signed with Jordan June 24. The protocol governs Jordanian-Palestinian relations in transport-related fields, including the movement of people, vehicles and goods between the Kingdom and the Palestinian self-rule areas. The protocol will take effect as soon as the two sides exchange the endorsed minutes of the protocol (Al Dustour).

**** FORMER PRIME** Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali has said a promising future awaits the Kingdom but the anticipated economic boom will not be felt by the public in the short-term as expected by many. In a lecture entitled "Peace and the Future of Jordan" delivered at Yarmouk University Sunday, Dr. Majali said many projects will be launched in Jordan and will contribute to improving living standards in Jordan and reducing economic gaps existing among the region's countries (Al Aswaq).

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Yugoslavia beat Lithuania to win title

ATHENS (Agencies) — The champions celebrated while the fans boomed and the losers cried robbery.

The European championship ended in disarray late Sunday, with Yugoslavia winning the title, Lithuania nearly abandoning the final, and Croatia walking out during the medal ceremony as Balkan politics overshadowed the end of tournament.

Yugoslavia lifted the gold medal by beating Lithuania 96-90. Guard Aleksander Djordjevic scored a game-high 41 points to lead Yugoslavia.

With 2:15 left, Lithuania nearly walked out of the game.

Lithuania's Saulius Strombergas was called for charging, sparking furious protests from the Lithuanian bench. The Lithuanians were given a technical foul and Strombergas refused to come back on the court.

Yugoslav players went to their bench, pleading with them to return.

When they did, Djordjevic hit two free throws to give his team a decisive six-point lead, 89-83, and the Yugoslavs held on to prevail in a highly dramatic match.

But the game was almost forgotten in the controversy after.

The Lithuanians said they were sorry they didn't abandon the game.

"We were not brave enough to do that," a furious Lithuanian coach Vladas Garastas said.

"It was a terrible refereeing. We couldn't go on,

we couldn't stand it. There was a political band in the game, someone wanted to prove that Yugoslavia is the best team in Europe," Garastas charged. "We made a mistake by coming back."

He said Yugoslavia should not have been allowed to play in the tournament because of the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Lithuanians charged

foul. We thought none of our big men would end the game," Ivkovic said. "We were also given a couple of technicals."

Yugoslavia, now made up of players from Serbia and Montenegro, returned triumphantly after missing all international events for nearly three years because of U.N. sanctions.

The Greek fans took the

EUROPEAN BASKETBALL

that Bora Stankovic, secretary general of FIBA, the world governing body of basketball who is a Yugoslav, had fixed the schedule to favour the Yugoslav team.

"This is the bottom of basketball," said Sarunas Marciulionis, Lithuania's Seattle Supersonics guard. "Where was Stankovic at the end, why didn't he attend the medal ceremony?"

"Did he not want to shake our hands and the hands of Croatians?"

Croatia, which won the bronze medal, left the podium as the Yugoslavs received their gold medals, before the Yugoslav national anthem was played.

The referees were George Toliver of the United States and Nikos Pitsilkas of Greece.

Yugoslav coach Dusan Ivkovic dismissed the charges. "We also fought against the referees. We picked up a lot of fouls."

"We tried to stop their pick and roll, but every time we put a screen, we were given a

side of Lithuania since it was Yugoslavia that beat Greece in the semifinals and booted loudly when the game was finished and when the Yugoslavians received the medals.

The big men, Yugoslavia's centre Vlade Divac, of the Los Angeles Lakers, and Arvydas Sabonis, the Lithuanian giant who is heading to the Portland Trail Blazers, fouled out during the game.

As Yugoslav players rushed to embrace at the end of the game, Sabonis had tears in his eyes at the end of the game.

Lithuania, a pioneer of European basketball, won the title in 1937 and 1939, and was trying to win its first since regaining independence with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Sabonis was a member of the victorious Soviet team in 1989.

FINAL RANKINGS
1. Yugoslavia 5. Italy
2. Lithuania 6. Spain
3. Croatia 7. Russia
4. Greece 8. France

Injured Boardman will return to cycling

LIVERPOOL (Agencies) — Olympic star Chris Boardman should recover from his injuries sustained at the start of the Tour de France on Saturday to return to competitive cycling, doctors said on Monday.

The 26-year-old, who won gold in the 1992 Olympics, suffered a double fracture of his left ankle and a broken right wrist in an accident on a rain-soaked circuit in Britain.

The cyclist was flown home and underwent a 90-minute operation on his ankle in hospital on Sunday night. The procedure involved fixing two screws to his ankle.

"He is comfortable this morning and his general condition is satisfactory. The fracture of his right wrist is a minor one and it will be in a cast for four weeks," said a hospital spokesman.

"We anticipate he will be able to return to competitive cycling."

Boardman's wife Sally, 26, told the Daily Post newspaper: "Chris is terribly disappointed but he's bearing up. His cycling will be back on the road as soon as possible and the next major event is the world championships in October."

"We will just have to see if Chris will make it for that — but if I know Chris he will give it a good go," she added.

Boardman gained international fame when he won the Olympic 4,000 metres individual pursuit race in 1992.



Frenchman Jacky Durand of the Castorama team, seen speeding off in the 7.3 kilometre prologue of the 82nd edition of the Tour de France (AFP photo)

The injury curse appeared to continue for Boardman's GAN teammates during the

group six places back. The Spaniard remained half a minute behind Durand

Tour de France

second stage on Monday as his successor as team leader the French national champion Eddy Seigneur was forced to abandon the race after suffering a tendon injury.

Baldato wins first stage. Italy's Fabio Baldato won the opening stage in his Tour de France debut Sunday, holding off France's Laurent Jalabert and Uzbek Djamolidine Abdoujaparov in a long, uphill sprint.

Jacky Durand barely retained the yellow jersey he earned in Saturday's prologue, with two other little-known Frenchmen within two seconds of his overall lead.

"I had to fight up to the finish," Durand said.

Swiss Tony Rominger had a surprisingly strong finish and would up sixth while Miguel Indurain, chasing a fifth consecutive overall victory, joined him in the lead in the standings. Although

called the prologue, Saturday's time-trial stage counts as part of the overall standings.

For Baldato, Sunday's victory was a dream start for a tour rookie.

His face contorted with pain and effort in the final dash, Baldato succeeded where many renowned sprinters failed.

"The last metres were terrible. That's just how it should be," he said.

In a long uphill straight to the finish, Italy's Mario Cipollini and Belgian Wilfried Nelissen peaked too early, and faded badly in the final kilometres.

Jalabert, trying to erase last year's memory when he crashed out in the opening stage, took the lead with 200 metres remaining and the partisan crowd cheering wildly.

"That was the most dangerous moment, when Jalabert came," Baldato said.

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

Nelson might coach Knicks

NEW YORK (AP) — Don Nelson has been offered the job as coach of the New York Knicks. The New York Times reported Monday. "Offers have been made and we're in the midst of going over a few things that still need to be worked out," Madison Square Garden President Dave Checketts told The Times. "Things are going well, but I'm not going to announce anything until everything is signed and sealed." The Times and the Sunday Boston Globe said an announcement would be made this week, possibly Thursday. A Knicks spokesman said Sunday that no announcement was imminent. If a multiyear contract is agreed upon, the 55-year-old former coach and general manager of the Golden State Warriors reportedly will receive \$2 million per year. The Times said. The new coach will replace Pat Riley, who resigned after the 1994-95 season. Nelson, who also has coached the Milwaukee Bucks, resigned from the Warriors in February with the team's record at 14-34. Before his departure, Nelson had become embroiled in bitter feuds with some of his players, then suffered from viral pneumonia.

AC Milan or abroad for Baggio

ROME (AFP) — Roberto Baggio, 1993 European footballer of the year, said on Monday that he would be meeting Italian giants AC Milan's directors this week and if they decline to sign him he said he would go abroad. Baggio, an integral part of Juventus' double winning team last season, said on his return from Argentina: "I am going to meet Milan's directors this week to see if they have decided to buy me." Italy's most prominent Buddhaist added: "If they do not buy me then I will definitely go abroad as I have had several offers." Rumours have abounded about possible moves to Japan and three English Premier League clubs Manchester United, Blackburn and Queens Park Rangers have been mentioned although only the latter club has not denied the rumours. Baggio was upset by Juventus the 1995 Italian Champions and Cup winners when they offered him a new contract, as his old one ended on June 30, but with a pay cut.

Fortune no match for Lewis

DUBLIN (AFP) — Britain's former WBC heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis made the most of his huge weight and height advantage to dispose of Australian Justin Fortune when the referee stopped their non-title fight in the round here on Sunday. Lewis, who lost his WBC title to American Oliver McColl, weighed over 13 kilos (two stone) more than his tough but limited opponent. But it was also the height and reach differential that added to the impression of their contest as a mismatch, with Lewis towering over Fortune by 21 centimetres. The Los Angeles-based 29-year-old, who had a record of 11 wins in 14 undistinguished fights before Sunday, stands just 1.72 metres (5ft 9in) compared to Lewis' 1.92 (6ft 5in).

FIA rubber stamps Italian GP

PARIS (R) — The International Automobile Federation (FIA) confirmed on Monday that the Italian Grand Prix would go ahead at Monza on September 10 as planned. FIA said in a statement that it had received a formal undertaking from the Italian Automobile Club that safety works agreed between FIA and the Monza organisers would be carried out in full in time for the race. Built in 1955, the Monza Formula One circuit fell short of FIA's new safety requirements. The Italian government committed itself last week to meeting these requirements.

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Ardiles heads for Mexico

LONDON (R) — Osvaldo Ardiles is about to put the soccer theories that did not work for him in England to the test in a Latin American setting.

The demands at Deportivo Guadalajara, Mexico's biggest and most popular club where he starts work as coach on Tuesday, will be as great as they were at Tottenham Hotspur, the London club that sacked their Argentine manager last year.

Ardiles has signed a one-year contract and is expected to win the Mexican championship which Guadalajara, record title holders, have not taken for eight years.

"That's the whole story, it starts and finishes there," Ardiles said about the responsibility of fulfilling the Mexican's expectations.

"It's a very important challenge in my life and sometimes it's good to change," he said in an interview.

Ardiles will fly to Guadalajara on Tuesday to begin pre-season training with his squad, who are all Mexicans. Guadalajara has traditionally never signed foreign players.

"It's like a second national team," he said. Guadalajara has six internationals who will play for their country in the Copa America in Uruguay starting this week. Ardiles said he might manage to go later in the tournament.

He said Guadalajara had been after him for some time but he had been reluctant to commit himself because his family is very settled in England 17 years after he came from Argentina to play for Tottenham.

"They had been after me for some time. But when their season ended they needed a decision so I went for it," said Ardiles, who has had only one concrete offer, which fell through, from an English club in the eight months since his departure from Spurs.

He is naturally disillusioned that his leaky Spurs defence should have earned him a tag as unreliable, in marked contrast to his brilliant attacking play guaranteed to prise open the tightest of opposition rearguards.

Ardiles said he would not go back on his principles of playing the "beautiful game" and backed his stand by pointing to Brazil's defeat of England last month which exposed the gulf in ability between the two nations.

He is going to a country where he says the game has improved considerably in recent years with significant input from compatriots such as Cesar Luis Menotti, his coach in Argentina's 1978 World Cup-winning team, and Ricardo La Volpe, a member of that squad.

"Mexican football has improved a lot in the last few years. It's a very technical game with some dynamism," he said.

"Football in Brazil and Argentina is a cut above the rest in the Americas, but Mexico, like Colombia, have come along."

Ardiles said that Deportivo Guadalajara was no ordinary football club.

"I loved everything about it," he said. "You have to be there to understand what it means at sporting and social level."

"It's huge, a social phenomenon, the Boca Juniors of Mexico," he added, comparing Guadalajara with Argentina's most popular club, which is to liken it to Manchester United in England.

Asked whether he would return to England at the end of the season when his contract expires, Ardiles said: "In principle, yes. But you never know."

Ardiles' wife and two sons will join him in Guadalajara in July while the boys are on holiday from their studies in London.

Agassi sails through; Tarango fined \$15,500

WIMBLEDON (AP) — Top-seeded Andre Agassi swept into the Wimbledon quarterfinals Monday with a straight-sets victory over Germany's Alexander Mronz.

Agassi ripped 23 baseline winners to overwhelm Mronz 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 in a centre court match lasting 85 minutes.

Mronz tried to attack with his big serve and volley, but Agassi responded with three return winners and eight passing shot winners.

"I was on top of my game today," Agassi said. "I controlled the backcourt pretty well. I could afford to wait for the right opportunity. I didn't have to take too many chances. I'm passing and lobbing really well."

The first man to reach the quarterfinals was 6th-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia, who overpowered Aaron Krickstein, 6-3, 6-3, 6-2.

In women's play, defending champion Conchita Martinez continued her easy run into the quarters with a 6-2, 6-3, win over qualifier Petra Kamstra of the Netherlands.

Mary Joe Fernandez, the 13th seed, took control after winning a tight first set and beat her best friend, No. 7 Lindsay Davenport, 7-6 (8-6), 6-1.

As the two players bugged at the net, Fernandez said she was sorry. Both players were sufter after the match.

"The last game was a little sad," Fernandez said. "I wanted to win, and at the same time, I didn't want her to lose."

The two trained together in Miami for two weeks, then flew to London together for another week of practice before Wimbledon.

"It was a lot more difficult than I expected it to be," Fernandez said. "It's hard playing a good friend. You don't get too excited when you're winning and too down when you're losing."

Davenport said, "She's pretty much like my sister. It was weird. We both kind of felt sorry for each other in the first set."

Fernandez was broken twice serving for the set, at 5-4 and 6-5. The 11th game lasted 28 points and included 11 deuces, six set points for Fernandez and seven break

points for Davenport.

Davenport finally won the marathon game with a backhand lob, then took a 5-3 lead in the tiebreaker. But Fernandez won three straight points and capitalised on her eighth set point when Davenport hit a forehand wide.

Fernandez maintained the momentum and raced through the second set with ease.

Also reaching the women's quarterfinals were fourth-seeded Jana Novotna and No. 15 Brenda Shultz-McCarthy of the Netherlands.

Novotna survived one of her trademark lapses to down Nicole Bradtke of Australia 6-0, 5-7, 6-4. Novotna lost to Steffi Graf in the 1993 final when leading 4-1 in the third set, and blew a 5-0, 40-love third-set lead against Chanda Rubin at the French Open last month.

This time, she was leading 6-0 and serving at 4-3 when Bradtke came back to force a third set. But Novotna held firm in the third set, getting the key break in the sixth game.

Shultz-McCarthy, the biggest server in women's tennis, overpowered Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia, 6-3, 6-1, to reach her first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

In the day's featured centre court match, two-time defending champion Pete Sampras was set to face Greg Rusedski, Britain's new tennis hero.

The Canadian-born Rusedski switched allegiance to Britain two months ago, instantly becoming the country's top player. Rusedski has a British mother and girlfriend and has lived in Surrey for three years.

In the only match between two seeds, No. 4 Goran Ivanisevic was pitted against No. 14 Todd Martin.

Tarango fined for outburst

Jeff Tarango was fined \$15,500 Monday for his Wimbledon outburst, the biggest fine ever imposed at the championships for an on-court offense.

The 26-year-old American was fined \$10,000 for verbally abusing the umpire, \$5,000 for defaulting the match and \$500 for unsportsmanlike

conduct — shouting "shut up" to the crowd.

Wimbledon officials said Tarango had 10 days to file a written appeal.

The highest previous fine at Wimbledon was the \$10,000 fine imposed on John McEnroe in 1991 for verbal abuse against a line judge.

Tarango walked off the court after a dispute with French chair umpire Bruno Rebeuh during Saturday's third-round match against Alexander Mronz.

Tarango called Rebeuh "corrupt" and accused him of bias towards other players. His French wife, Benedicte, later slapped Rebeuh in the face.

The drama happened with Mronz leading 7-6 (8-6), 3-1. After disputing a line call, Tarango, the first American to be defaulted at Wimbledon in the open era, shouted "shut up" to the crowd after they jeered him over the line call dispute.

When Rebeuh gave him a code violation, Tarango exploded and shouted at the umpire: "You are the most corrupt official in the game," before picking up his bag and storming off court.

In his official match report released Monday, Rebeuh described how Mrs. Tarango slapped him.

"On my way back to the referee's office, Mrs. Tarango walked up behind me, pinched and twisted my arm and then slapped my face twice and said, 'anyway, I will see you again,'" the report said.

During a post-match news conference, Tarango accused Rebeuh of fixing matches to ingratiate himself with certain players. He specifically mentioned Swiss player Marc Rosset.

Wimbledon notebook

Rusedski call-up expected: Greg Rusedski, Britain's latest import from Canada, is expected to make his Davis Cup debut for his new country against Monaco at Eastbourne next month and it will be a major surprise if he does not finish on the winning side.

One of the main reasons why Rusedski was allowed to change nationality was because he had lived in Britain

for three years. If Monaco adopted the same rules they could turn out quite a team from the long-list of tennis tax exiles living in the Principality.

For the singles they could pick Boris Becker and Goran Ivanisevic and for doubles, the world No. 1 pair, Paul Haarhuis and Jacco Eltingh.

And standing by, just in case of injuries, could be Marc Rosset, Richard Krajicek, Thomas Enqvist, Andre Agassi, Jonas Bjorkman, Karsten Krasemann, Renzo Furlan, Jan Siemerink, Martin Damm, and Petr Korda.

Knowing your left from your right: American doubles specialist Luke Jensen is still in the mixed doubles and that spells good news for all those Wimbledon fans who like to see something different. Jensen, known as "Dual Hand Luke," can play almost as well left-handed as right, and he often disconcerts opponents by changing his racket hand during rallies.

Nine times Wimbledon champion Martina Navratilova bluntly condemned the appearance of her young namesake Martina Hingis at Wimbledon: "Fourteen is too bloody young to turn professional."

The Czech-born Swiss girl, blasted off court by German ace Steffi Graf, was the last young player to qualify for a Grand Slam tournament. The international rules are changed next January and the new limit is being set at 16.

Burn-out is the big fear — with the cases of Tracy Austin, Andrea Jaeger and Jennifer Capriati often cited as the reason for the new regulation in a fiercely competitive sport.

Twenty years ago, left-handed American Roscoe Tanner had his service electronically timed at 141 miles an hour (225 kph).

But IBM, who officially clock all big servers, began their timings only in 1990, 11 years after "tornado" Tanner lost to Sweden's Bjorn Borg in the Wimbledon final.

Rusedski, whose national identity switch annoyed other English players, now hopes to step up a gear and put his top-speed spot firmly in the record books.

Wimbledon claims to be the biggest sports event in Europe for caterers and has the statistics to prove it.

Affluent socialites quaff 12,500 bottles of champagne during the tournament and guzzle 12 tonnes of salmon. At the other end of the scale in the cheap seats, the masses get through 30,000 portions of fish and chips.

Rusedski top 'aceman': Britain's Canadian-born Greg Rusedski, with 77 aces from three matches, tops the big-serving charts at Wimbledon. Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, twice a finalist, is in second place with 71.

Rusedski has also produced the fastest serve of the Championships so far with a 134 miles per hour (215 kph) effort — off a second serve.

Agassis everywhere: Emulating the Andre Agassi pirate look is easier these days.

That's because Agassi's sponsor, Nike, has put out a purely promotional kit called the "Aka" — the official also known as Agassi look-alike kit.

The kit provides Agassi clones with one black swoosh, bandana, a paste-on goatee, and sideburns and two hoop earrings.

Everybody loves Andre and would like to experience what it's like to be Andre," said Jason-Cohn, the Nike marketing person who developed the gimmicky idea. "It's a lot of fun. We're just giving it out here at Wimbledon as a promotional item."

Pigs, hens and bombs at Wimbledon: Wimbledon, once had its own farmyard of pigs and hens.

That was in World War Two when the venue for the world's most famous tennis tournament was also used for drilling troops and training ambulancemen.

It did not escape unscathed. In October 1940, German bombers attacked the club, striking the Centre Court roof and destroying 1,200 seats.

The hallowed turf court remained untouched until 1976 when vandals broke into Wimbledon, dug holes in the centre court and daubed the stand with paint.

Sheikh Mohammad wins 2nd Derby

THE CURRAGH, Ireland (AFP) — Sheikh Mohammad celebrated his second 1995 Derby win when French-trained Winged Love gained revenge for his French Derby defeat by Celtic Swing winning the Budweiser Irish Derby, worth 338,000 Irish pounds to the winner, over a mile and a half (2400 metres) Sunday.

English favourite Celtic Swing was only eighth. Winged Love had been one of two Mohammed runners to be supplemented for the race at a cost of 60,000 pounds each, a typically bold move by his owner and keen Napoleon fan and qualified lawyer trainer Andre Fabre.

Ironically the horse that battled him the whole way to the line Irish runner Definite Article was also supplemented by his trainer Dermot Weld and owners Moyglare Stud Farm.

Only 13 went to post as

English Derby 3rd Presenting injured himself when he played up on the plane coming over.

From the break two were left standing Damacher and Annus Mirabilis, while surprisingly Munwar fought to take up the pace with Court of Honour and for the second time in a big race on Sunday the favourites pacemaker failed to do his job as Daraydan Celtic Swing's pacesetter struggled to get to the front.

Celtic Swing's rider Kevin Darley, evidently unaware of the disaster that was going on ahead, settled his horse in last position but as they approached the straight the alarm bells must have been ringing as he saw his pace-maker in reverse gear and he was still last.

Into the straight, Court of Honour took up pole position and headed for the judges' decision with fellow English

challenger Double Eclipse tracking him on the inside and at the point Celtic Swing made his move down the outside.

However, it was soon clear that the favourite was flying a white flag and as the pacesetters Court of Honour and Double Eclipse dreamt of different days of glory a battle royal developed between Winged Love (5-1) under Olivier Pesel and the Michael Kinane ridden Definite Article (5-1).

Mano a mano like two great boxers they slugged it out as first the Frenchman gained the upper hand and then the advantage, in the final furlong went to the valiant Irishman but with courage that only belongs to the finest competitors Winged Love grabbed the lead for the final decisive time. Annus Mirabilis did very well to run on to be third at 9-1.



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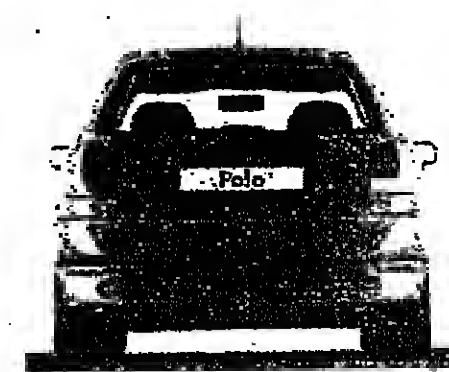


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PEPSI

Morocco plans diplomatic push for peace in Bosnia

U.N. force fires back at Serbs after attack on convoy

RABAT (Agencies) — Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic left Rabat on Monday after talks with King Hassan and said Morocco had agreed to lead a diplomatic push in Europe and at the United Nations to bring peace to Bosnia.

Mr. Silajdzic said Moroccan Prime Minister Abdul Latif Filali would lead Bosnia's case when he visits Paris and Brussels later this week.

"We agreed with His Majesty to move ahead with diplomatic initiatives, starting with Mr. Filali's visit to Paris and Brussels to be followed by a call for an extraordinary session of the United Nations General Assembly on Bosnia," Mr. Silajdzic told reporters at Rabat airport before leaving for Paris.

Diplomatic sources in Rabat said an Islamic delegation headed by Morocco would tour capitals of the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council to discuss the deteriorating situation in Bosnia.

Mr. Silajdzic called for a meeting at ministerial level of the Islamic contact group and the international contact group on Bosnia — the United States, Britain, Germany, France and Russia — to "examine the international contact group's peace plan agreed one year ago and rejected by the Bosnian Serbs."

Mr. Silajdzic, who arrived in Morocco on Saturday, said he wanted the two contact groups to meet before the

end of July.

King Hassan is current chairman of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), which has strongly backed the Bosnian Muslims. The OIC contact group met in May and repeated the OIC's view that a U.N. arms embargo on Bosnia was not morally applicable and hindered that its members might ignore it.

Asked if he hoped for a lifting of the arms embargo to allow Bosnian government forces to pursue the military option after the failure of international peace efforts, Mr. Silajdzic said:

"We are a peace-loving people. If we can solve the problem peacefully that would be the best solution but if there is no solution we hope for a lifting of the arms embargo."

"All depends on the U.S. congressional vote and we hope that Congress will obtain the two-thirds majority needed," Mr. Silajdzic said. Washington has favoured the lifting of the embargo and a congressional vote is expected later this month.

In Sarajevo, U.N. peacekeepers responded to an attack by Bosnian Serbs Monday firing a heavy mortar at a gun position but insisted on avoiding an escalation of the deteriorating situation in Bosnia.

French legionnaires fired their heavy mortars for the second time in two days after Serb forces loosed off several

cannon rounds at a U.N. convoy using the Mount Igman route, the only road in and out of the Serb-besieged city.

No peacekeepers suffered injuries and the single round exploded 100 metres from the Serb gun. Two hours later another convoy was again attacked by Serb cannon but the peacekeepers did not respond, a U.N. official said.

On Sunday morning the legionnaires fired two high explosive rounds at the Serb gun in similar circumstances. The weapon was not hit.

In Zagreb, U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi told reporters the U.N. riposte was "a legitimate act of self-defence so it was fully justifiable."

There is unlikely to be any response, however, to Sunday's mortar bomb attack on the Sarajevo headquarters of the U.N. commander in Bosnia, U.N. officials said.

Two mortars slammed into the area around the compound just after midday while another exploded above the main building in the base. Four peacekeepers were slightly wounded.

Lieutenant Colonel Gary Coward, a U.N. military spokesman, said the United Nations would not point the finger of blame at either the Serbs or the Bosnian army, both of whom have mortars in the area.

However, one senior U.N. figure said: "We think it (the attack on the U.N. headquar-

ters) was in response to Igman."

"We all have our suspicions, ... but as we cannot identify where that round came from we cannot level the strongest possible protest to one individual party. We need proof," Col. Coward said.

This kind of protest, though, is likely to be no more than the stern letters of protest that have been sent to the Bosnian Serbs on many previous occasions.

Peacekeeping officials in Bosnia have stressed their inability to respond to all the attacks on their personnel citing their limiting rules of engagement and the inherent risks of being seen to be taking sides. U.N. troops in the main are lightly armed and in highly vulnerable places.

In the wake of the U.N. hostage crisis and the eruption of heavy fighting last month as government forces opened several fronts around the city to try and loosen the siege, the United Nations has retreated even further into a strict peacekeeping role.

According to this policy, confrontation is to be avoided at all costs and the mission to operate with the consent of the parties only. As this has been withheld by the Bosnian Serbs, the U.N. has failed to fulfill even the most basic elements of its mission such as delivering aid to Sarajevo on a regular basis.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Mubarak receives envoy of Qatari ruler

ALEXANDRIA (R) — Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak contacted the new Qatari emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, for the first time on Monday, a delayed sign that Egypt has recognised the recent change of power in the Gulf state. Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa told reporters Mr. Mubarak received Qatari's Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Jabr Al Thani, who handed him a letter from the new Qatari emir. Sheikh Hamad deposed his father in a palace coup last Tuesday. Mr. Musa said Mr. Mubarak telephoned the new emir during his meeting with the Qatari minister and "confirmed the strong ties that bind the two brotherly peoples." Egypt had delayed recognition of the political change in Qatar, saying it had not been formally notified. Mr. Musa said the Qatari foreign minister also congratulated Mr. Mubarak for escaping an assassination attempt in Addis Ababa last week and informed him of the latest development in Qatar.

53 inmates escape from Sudan prison

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Fifty-three prison inmates have escaped from a prison in central Sudan after making a hole in the wall and only nine of them were recaptured with the others still at large, the Al Engaz Al Watani newspaper reported Monday. It was the first time a mass escape occurred in a Sudanese prison despite the fragile condition of most prison buildings. The daily said one of the prisoners who escaped from the Al Damazin prison in central Sudan was found dead "because of thirst" as was demonstrated by an autopsy. It said the mass escape occurred in June. "The prisons are not receiving the first priority for implementation of the improvement plans, because of the economic situation," the director general of the prison administration, General Al Sheikh Al Rayah Al Sheikh, said. Al Damazin prison was established in 1953 during the British colonial rule in Sudan. Most of the prisoners built at that time are of brick or stone. "Some of those prisoners (established during the British rule) have never received any improvement," the director of the prisons was quoted as saying.

Kurdish rebels kill four policemen

TUNCELI, Turkey (R) — Kurdish separatist guerrillas have killed four members of a crack police team on the outskirts of a heavily-defended town in eastern Turkey, security officials said on Monday. Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas attacked the police special forces members in the hilly suburbs of Tunceli on Sunday afternoon, they said. Three of them were killed almost instantly and the fourth died in hospital on Monday, the officials said. The special forces are on guard 24 hours a day on hills around the town, nerve centre of a counter-insurgency drive in Tunceli province involving about 50,000 troops.

Iran begins manoeuvres in Gulf

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran began eight days of military manoeuvres in the northern Gulf on Monday, the anniversary of the 1988 downing of an Iranian jetliner by a U.S. warship, Tehran Radio reported. The naval manoeuvres, code-named Victory Six, will involve 58,000 members of the armed forces, Iranian navy chief Admiral Ali Shamkhani said earlier. He said the manoeuvres were routine training and were not offensive in nature. On July 3, 1988, a U.S. warship downed an Iran Air jetliner over the Gulf, killing 290 people. American military officials said the Airbus was mistaken for an Iranian warplane. Iran holds several dozen maritime exercises yearly. Earlier this year, American officials noted Iran was bolstering its defence in the Gulf and expressed concerns at the possibility of an accidental confrontation with U.S. Navy ships.

Kosher bus keeps sexes apart

BNEI BERAQ (AFP) — A kosher bus has been introduced to an ultra-orthodox suburb of Tel Aviv to keep men and women apart, the daily Maariv reported Monday. The front seats of the Dan company bus in Bnei Beraq are reserved for men while women must sit at the back. Local rabbis praised the policy which it said "avoids arousing the basest instincts in our men." However, a deputy from the left-wing Meretz Party, Naomi Hazan, demanded a ban on the "shameful" segregation of the sexes by the bus company. In a world advancing towards the 21st century, Dan is sinking back into the 19th, she said. Maariv newspaper's legal commentator said Dan's policy was an infringement of basic democratic rights.



CROWN PRINCE RETURNS HOME: His Prince Faisal and Prince Ghazi, the King's Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on cultural secretary, Prince Ali Ben Nayef, the Monday returned home after a several-day King's private chamberlain and senior official visit to the United Kingdom. The cials. Returning with Prince Hassan was His Crown Prince was received at the airport by Royal Highness Prince Rashed Ben Al Hassan Their Royal Highnesses Prince Abdullah, (Petra photo)

Israelis step up push against Orient House

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Arab East Jerusalem, a perpetual thorn in the side of Israel's government, came under double-barrelled assault Monday from Israeli lawmakers and municipal officials.

The Israeli municipality officials threatened to demolish the Orient House, which the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) uses as its unofficial Jerusalem offices, if the PLO does not get a permit for ongoing construction there.

Yehoshua Matza, a legislator from the opposition right-wing Likud Party, introduced a bill in parliament aimed at shutting down the East Jerusalem compound.

Under the terms of the September 1993 Israel-PLO peace agreement, the Palestinians are prohibited from conducting government activities in Jerusalem until the status of the city is negotiated.

PLO officials have held meetings and received a string of foreign dignitaries there.

"What are you doing to prevent this?" Mr. Matza demanded Monday of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. "We call on the government to ensure that they do nothing to undermine Jerusalem's position as the capital."

Mr. Matza's bill would im-

pose prison sentences on anyone engaging in unauthorised governmental activity in Jerusalem. No vote was scheduled Monday on the proposal.

Mr. Rabin's government, however, opposes Mr. Matza's bill.

Run Cohen of the liberal Meretz Party, Mr. Rabin's coalition partner, accused Mr. Matza of exploiting the charged issue to provoke a political crisis.

"Yehoshua Matza wants to explode Jerusalem," he said.

In a move initiated by the right-wing mayor, Ehud Olmert, the municipality said they sent the Orient House hand-delivered letters threatening legal action — including a request for a demolition order — if the PLO does not apply for a rezoning permit for the building and stop illegal construction there.

The municipality says the building is zoned for use as a hotel.

Ishak Al Budeiri, director of the Orient House, said no construction permit was needed because the Orient House was only being renovated, and no new buildings were being added. He said he had not received any communication about zoning.

Israel Housing Minister Binjamin Ben Eliezer said the question of the Orient House should be addressed at the national level, not by the municipality.

Italy hero magistrate may face more grilling

ROME (R) — Antonio Di Pietro, the former magistrate who became a folk hero for exposing Italy's corrupt old guard, may face further questioning into allegations he himself acted illegally.

"The griller has been grilled. The man who asked the questions is answering them. The man who made accusing his line of work has had to defend himself," Rome's La Repubblica said after Mr. Di Pietro endured an 18-hour interrogation on Sunday.

"Di Pietro, clear yourself," the newspaper said in a headline that sounded like a plea to the man most Italians want to believe is stainless.

Magistrate Fabio Salamone, who led the questioning in the police station in Brescia, east of Milan, told reporters the interrogation had produced a 70-page transcript.

"Our job now is to understand if these facts can constitute crimes or not," Mr. Salamone said, adding that the session had been relaxed and another one might be held after the summer.

The grilling was the longest in more than three years of Italy's corruption scandals and ended at 1.40 a.m. on Monday morning (23:40 GMT Sunday).

It was a strange episode for the 44-year-old Di Pietro as well as for Italians who have become accustomed to see him pointing his finger at the dock rather than sitting in it.

Mr. Di Pietro, whose enemies' list reads like a who's who of Italian post-war political and industry, defended himself against accusations of abuse of office and graft — the same charges he levelled at people he interrogated until he resigned last year.

His lawyer Massimo D'Inoia said that during the interrogation, the former magistrate offered his interrogators "reflections on the unfounded accusations

against him."

Mr. Salamone said he would most likely shelve one of the three strands of the investigation into Mr. Di Pietro for lack of proof.

"I listened to a person who is being investigated but also a person who has been offended," Mr. Salamone said, apparently referring to some of the anonymous accusations.

Mr. Di Pietro, who along with his anti-graft colleagues toppled Italy's political establishment with their "tangentopoli" (bribeville) probes, says the allegations are a smear campaign.

The investigation into Mr. Di Pietro as well as his accusers began more than two months ago after the allegations surfaced.

His main accuser is Milan's financier Giancarlo Gornini, who says he lent Mr. Di Pietro about \$75,000 in the late 1980s to help him buy a house for Susanna Mazzoleni, who became his second wife. He repaid the loan without interest in 1994.

Mr. Gornini has also accused Mr. Di Pietro of trying to convince him and an associate to reschedule the gambling debts of a friend, Eleuterio Rea, and of using his position to help Mr. Rea win a job as head of Milan's traffic police.

The strand of the investigation which Mr. Salamone said he would most likely shelve involves allegations of abuse of office levelled against the former magistrate by lawyers for finance police General Giuseppe Cerciello.

Lawyers for Gen. Cerciello, who has been accused of taking bribes from companies in exchange for lenient audits by his men, have accused Mr. Di Pietro of using unorthodox methods to lure suspects into making incriminating statements against the general and former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

Rabin says no 'enemy' action in huge blaze

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ruled out any idea that Palestinians started a major fire on Monday as investigations into the cause continued.

"The fire was not caused by enemy action," Mr. Rabin told reporters at Shohet, the worst hit village about 10 kilometres from Jerusalem.

The huge blaze destroyed two million trees, 55 homes, forced the evacuation of seven villages and injured 44 people, officials said Monday.

Fire chief Rami Yaffe said he believed the fire had been started accidentally, but arson could not be discounted.

The interior ministry was later Monday to name a retired army general to an official committee of inquiry.

Mr. Rabin promised compensation to the homeless and pledged reforestation would be rapid.

More than 30 homes were burnt down, a hotel damaged and 70,000 chickens roasted alive in Shohet.

Desert winds whipped the blaze through 2,000 hectares of forest on the edge of Jerusalem from midday Sunday until it was brought under control at nightfall.

Two of the injured, most suffering from smoke inhalation, were in a serious condition.

Jewish national fund forestry director Nahum Zaks said: "It will take decades to repair the damage to the forests."

The finance ministry estimated the cost of the blaze in millions of dollars.

The main highway to Tel Aviv was closed for five hours causing huge traffic jams and 20 electricity pylons were also badly damaged.

Police and army helicopters as well as crop-spraying planes were brought in to bomb the flames with water.

A pall of smoke drifted over the Holy City where people complained of breathing difficulties as the smell of burning filled the air from the mainly pine woods on the nearby hills.

Temperatures soared to 30 Celsius, an 111-year high in central Israel for July 2.

Hundreds of residents fled five rural communities in the path of the fire. Hardest hit was Shohet, semi-collective community about 10 kilometres west of Jerusalem.

Fire in Acre

Meanwhile a fire in an ice cream factory forced a partial evacuation in the northern Israeli town of Acre on Monday.

Israel radio said four people were hurt in the Acre fire, which threatened ammonia tanks on the factory roof.

"Some of them (residents) are being moved. There's a partial evacuation. I'm not exactly sure how many. It's not because they are in danger from the fire but because of the ammonia," police spokesman Eric Bar Chen said. He could not immediately confirm reports of injured.

The radio said fire-fighters were working to cool down tanks holding 20 tonnes of ammonia on the roof of the factory to prevent them from exploding and sending a poisonous cloud over the coastal town.

COLUMN

3 arrested for pouring blood on U.S. plane

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. park police arrested three protesters at the National Air and Space Museum for allegedly pouring human blood on the plane that dropped the first atomic bomb on Japan. Local television stations reported. Park Police officials confirmed that three people were arrested, but released no details on their identities or the circumstances of the demonstration. The controversial exhibit of the Enola Gay, which opened to the public last week, was significantly scaled down after veterans groups protested that in its original form it would have been too hard on the United States and too sympathetic to Japan. But the current exhibition has drawn the life of peace activists, who say it plays down the horrific consequences of the bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Bear attack heightens fears in Alaska park

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (R) — A section of Alaska's popular Chugach State Park remained closed Monday a day after a fatal bear attack that may have been North America's worst, and officials were urging park visitors to be slower and louder on the trails. Killed in the park's first fatal bear attack were Marcy Trent, 77, and her son-in-law, Larry Waldron, 45, both of Anchorage. They were avid long-distance runners — Trent held national age-group records — and were believed to have been on a training run on a thickly vegetated park trail at McHugh Creek, in south Anchorage, when the attack occurred Saturday. Experts also believe it was also the first two-victim fatal bear attack in Alaska, and possibly in the continent. "It was one of the major bear attacks in North America, because I don't know of a situation where two people have been killed by a single bear," said Jerry Lewanski, chief ranger for Chugach State Park, a 25-year-old reserve that surrounds Alaska's largest city. Details about the attack remained sketchy. There were no witnesses.

Man drowns in pit latrine

LAGOS (AFP) — A man died at the weekend submerged in a pit latrine where he went to answer the call of nature in a village near Abuja, the nation's capital, the official Newswatch magazine said. The victim, a middle-aged tailor identified as Malam Ismaila, died in Karmo village when the pit latrine, hurriedly completed less than two weeks ago, caused in and submerged him, NAN said. Help to rescue Ismaila came too late because his neighbours were unaware of the accident until one of them wanted to use the same latrine, NAN said. The landlord of the house hurriedly completed the latrine to beat a deadline set for him by the Environmental Protection Agency which had earlier taken him to court for not providing toilet facilities in his house, the agency said.

Solar eclipse to be visible on Oct. 24

MANILA (AFP) — The last solar eclipse to occur this century will be visible from certain parts of the Philippines as it unfolds on Oct. 24, the state-run news agency reported Sunday. The official Philippine News Agency (PNA) quoted the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) as saying that the total solar eclipse will occur at about noon (0400 GMT) and will last for two minutes and 16 seconds. PAGASA said that the rare phenomenon will be fully visible from Tawi-Tawi province, 1,000 kilometres (620 miles) south of Manila, and could be partly seen from other parts of the Philippines like Manila and Baguio City in the north. The eclipse would be shorter than the one in 1988, also seen from parts of the Philippines, PNA said, adding tourism officials were preparing for an expected influx of enthusiasts.